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# THE JOLLY ROVER



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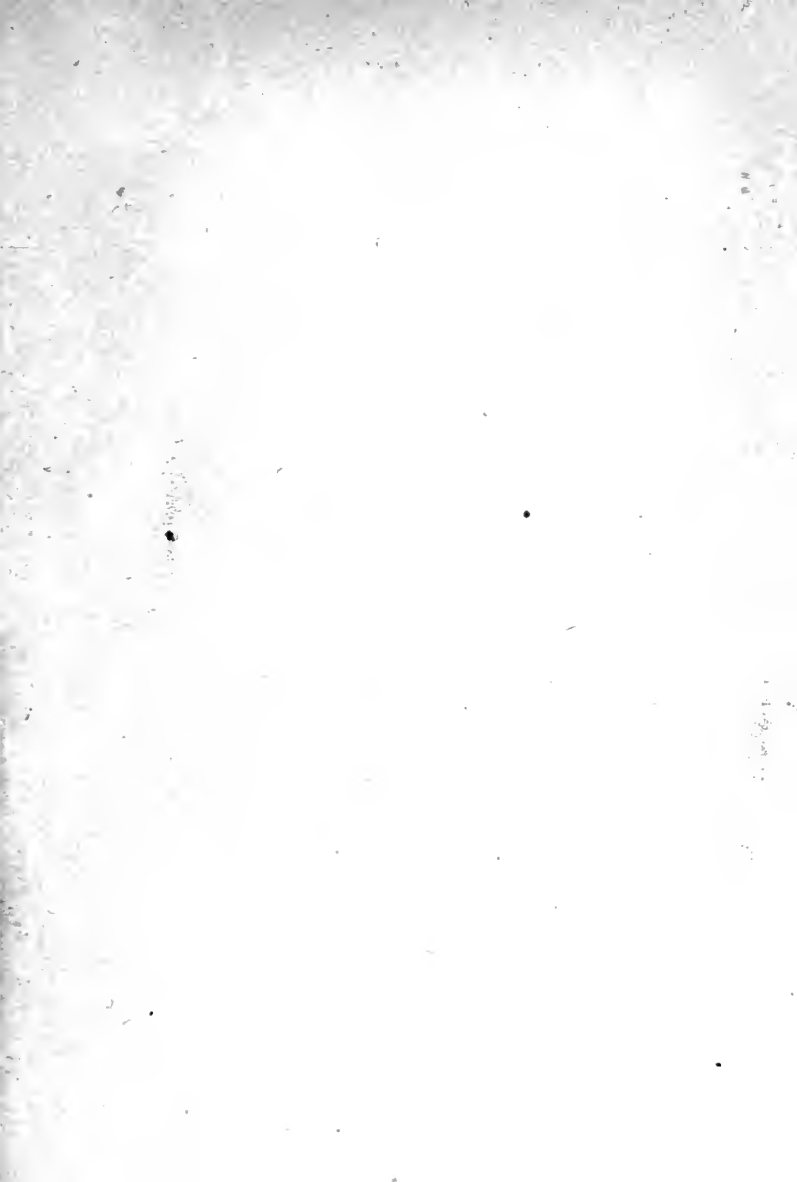
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Arthur  
from Uncle George  
Dec 1882



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ARTHUR SANK DOWN ON THE SIDE OF THE BUNK. Page 121.

THE  
JOLLY ROVER

BY  
J. T. TROWBRIDGE

*Illustrated*

BOSTON  
LEE AND SHEPARD, PUBLISHERS  
NEW YORK: CHARLES T. DILLINGHAM  
1883



## THE SILVER MEDAL STORIES.

By J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

1. THE SILVER MEDAL.
2. YOUNG JOE AND OTHER BOYS.
3. HIS OWN MASTER.
4. BOUND IN HONOR.
5. THE POCKET RIFLE.
6. THE JOLLY ROVER.

*All Handsomely Illustrated.*

*Sets in neat box.*



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THE

# JOLLY ROVER.

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## CHAPTER I.

### WHY ARTHUR LEFT HOME.



ARTHUR WING had reached the mature age of fourteen, when he made up his mind that it was time for him to see the world and do something heroic.

"We can't afford to waste many more years in this humdrum existence, *can* we, Stub?" he said to his friend and neighbor, Reuben Culvert, who had already wasted two more years than Arthur, and was in despair at finding himself sixteen, without having achieved either fame or fortune.

The humdrum existence of which Arthur complained, consisted in going to school about nine months in the year, in doing small chores about

the barn and garden, particularly in summer-time, when there were beds to weed and peas and beans to pick, and in having many an hour and half-day to himself for swimming, fishing, ball-playing and other sports.

Not so very humdrum after all, if he had only known it! How many boys of his age would have found it joy enough only to have got out of their shop or street into that fresh green garden some July morning, amidst the young corn and the currant-bushes! How many would have snatched eagerly at his privileges of home and school!

But Arthur Wing was none of your commonplace boys of that sort. His mind had been formed by extraordinary models.

His friend Stub took *The Boys' Own*, a weekly paper filled with stories of astonishing boy-heroes which Stub and Arthur had read and talked over until it was no wonder that their present life seemed wanting in flavor.

"No, Artie," said Stub, "and I ain't going to waste many more, you bet!"

If you could have seen him lying on the grass there in the orchard, a short, stocky figure, with short legs and short-cropped hair ("fighting-cut,"



he called it), and heard him say, *No, I ain't!* to anything, with a grim look and a swaggering shake of his rough head, you would have understood at once how he came by his nickname.

Artie—a fair and slender lad, with no such stoutness of limb and stubbornness of soul as distinguished his friend—looked upon him with admiration.

He deemed him a great man already, a hero at sixteen; and it was Stub's influence over him, more, perhaps, than *The Boys' Own*, which had wrought him up to the pitch of resolving to see the world and seek his fortune.

It was *The Boys' Own* which inspired Stub, and it was Stub and *The Boys' Own* together that inspired Artie, in the adventurous step they were about to take.

After many a moonlight meeting, and more than one long afternoon talk lying there on the orchard grass, their plans were matured, and the time was agreed upon for setting out on their travels.

When that time arrived, Arthur was troubled with most unheroic misgivings.

It was early one summer morning—very early indeed—when a fish-line which he had tied to his big toe the night before and hung out of the

chamber window, was pulled sharply, and he started up in bed half-awake.

He had hardly time to rub his eyes and remember what the line was for, when there came another and more violent jerk, — as if there had been a hundred-pound catch at the other end, — which made him cry out with pain.

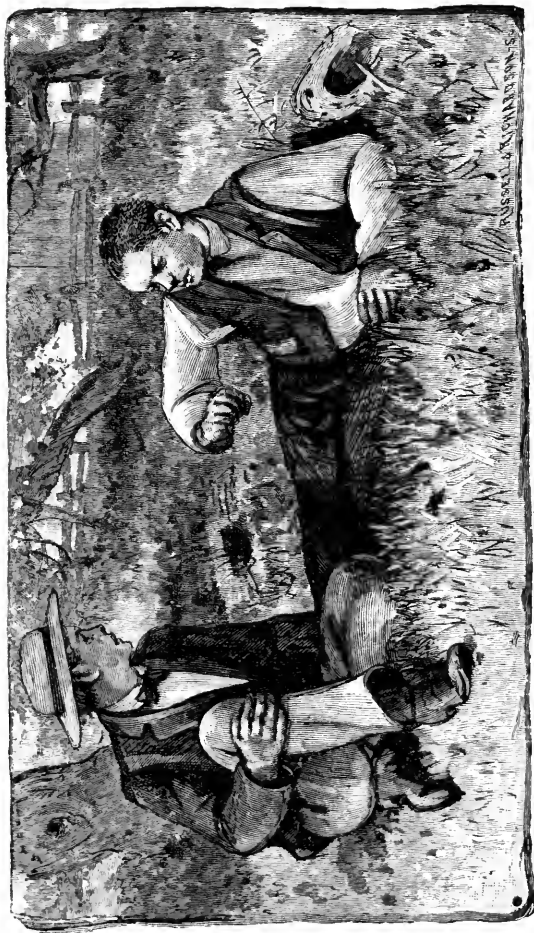
He knew well enough the sort of fish he had to deal with.

“Ow ! Stub ! don’t !” he exclaimed, getting hold of the line to prevent his toe from being whisked off, and quickly putting his head out of the window. “What do you yank that way for?”

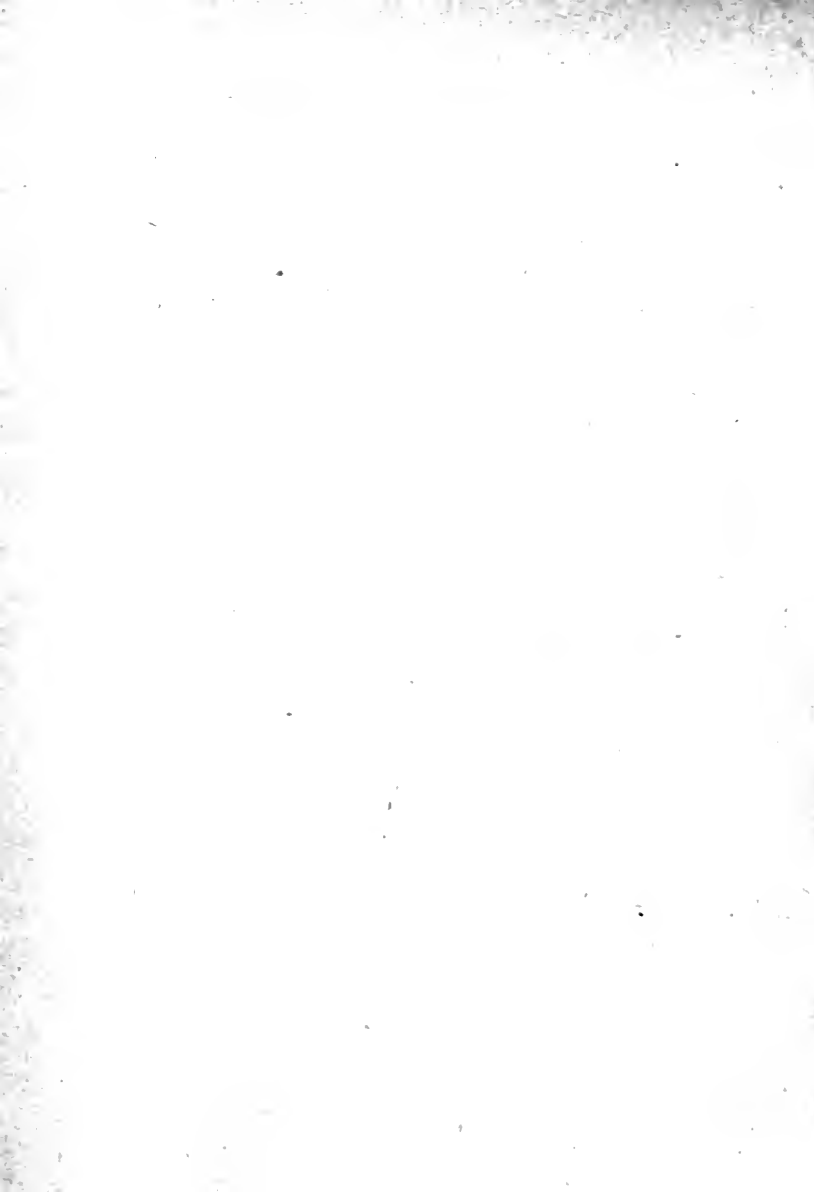
“Come on,” whispered Stub, dimly seen beside the syringa-bushes below. “Chuck me your bundle.”

To divert suspicion from his real object, in case he should be heard stealing from the house at that hour, Arthur had the night before got leave to go a-fishing in the morning over to Lommond’s Pond. He was to start as early as he pleased, take his luncheon along and be gone all the forenoon.

He had everything ready for a very different expedition ; money in his pocket, which his father had paid him for picking strawberries and doing other not very arduous tasks ; and clothes in a



FORMING THEIR PLANS. Page 12.



small satchel which he had packed before going to bed, and hidden under a chair, convenient for being tossed from the window.

The enterprise had looked grand and glorious to him then, after the excitement of a long talk with Stub. But he had lain awake afterwards and cooled his ardor with a little serious reflection. And now, roused up so suddenly in the chill dawn, from deep sleep and a comfortable bed, he did not feel as if there was a particle of the hero left in him.

When he looked out on the great, gloomy, silent world, and into the dim, uncertain future, it was with a sad heart and a cold stomach ; and he could not help thinking that there was something good for a boy, after all, in a home like that. He had given his word to Stub, however, and he could not break it at once.

"I'll talk it over with him again," thought he, "and get him to go a-fishing ; we'll start, but come home before night, anyway."

Comforting his conscience with this promise, he hurriedly put on a suit of strong dark-gray clothes. Then he lifted his satchel. He did not want to take that ; but what would Stub say to his starting without it ?

While he was hesitating, ashamed to go out and avow to him his changed intentions, Stub whistled with impatience.

"I can hide it somewhere, and bring it home when we come back," Artie said to himself, and dropped it down to Stub waiting among the syringa-bushes.

The moment it was out of his hand, a feeling of dread came over him, as if he had committed himself to some act of irretrievable and fatal wrong.

He went softly to the stairs, hoping that nobody else was awake in the house. Passing his sister's door, he paused to listen. No sound came from within.

She was older than he by three or four years, and much inclined to set up a sisterly authority over him. This had been one source of his discontent.

"To be hawed and geed about by women-folks!" Stub had said to him with great contempt. "Think young fellers like me and you are going to stand that? No, we ain't!" he declared with the swaggering shake of that rough head of his.

So Arthur had nursed the spirit of rebellion in his heart; often saying to himself, "She'll find out! She'll wake up some fine morning and find I'm not her slave any longer."

And his parents, wouldn't they be made sorry for upholding her authority, and for all the hated tasks and reproofs to which he had been subjected?

He had found a sullen satisfaction in these vindictive thoughts. But, passing that sister's door, this last gray morning, he could not but ask himself if he should ever see her again; nor help remembering how kind she really was to him, with all her domineering ways.

And what had his parents ever required of him that was not just and right? If they had given him duties to perform, were they not always doing something for him? If they had sent him to school against his will, and sometimes added punishment to reproof, had not all been designed for his good?

Parents are not all-wise; and no doubt Artie's had sometimes erred in their family discipline, taking too readily the side of the obedient sister, and visiting with perhaps too frequent condemnation the faults of the son.

But was not he himself really to blame for this? He knew that he was fretful, ungrateful, and perverse, and that they were in truth his best friends.

All this came over him, not in so many words,

but in one great wave of feeling, as he passed his sister's door.

It was only his promise given to that bad companion waiting outside which prevented him from going back to his room, having a good cry of remorse and shame over his folly, and resolving to be thenceforth a different boy.

He passed on; and now his mother's quick ear caught the sound of his step on the stairs.

"Are you going so soon, Arthur?" she said, in her kind and gentle tones.

"Yes'm," the boy answered, in a constrained voice. "Stub is waiting."

"Well," she replied, "I hope you will have good luck, and a good time, and be home at dinner. Your luncheon is on the table; and you'd better eat something, besides, before you start. You'll find a pie and a sandwich I left out for you. And, my son, do take good care of yourself! You know how bad we should all feel if anything should happen to you."

She was always just so anxious about him; unreasonably so, he had often thought; and he had usually listened to that stereotyped phrase — "do take good care of yourself!" — with the scorn of an impatient boy.



But it excited different feelings in him now. And when he found his breakfast and luncheon awaiting him on the kitchen table, prepared as only his own kind and thoughtful mother ever prepared anything, he had to shut his teeth and wink hard to keep back a sob.

Ah, if only he had not dropped that satchel from the window! But it was done: and —

"Well," he inwardly vowed, as he went out, "I'll just go a-fishing, and then come back home!"

"You're a pretty feller!" Stub said in a whisper, when they met. "I thought you never would come."

"I was pretty near not coming," Arthur confessed, taking the satchel Stub handed him.

"What's up now?" Stub demanded.

"I — I feel kind of sick this morning," said Arthur. "I don't believe I can go. Let's put it off for a day or two. Will ye?"

"Put it off? No, *sir!*" said Stub. "You'll feel better after you've got the sleep out of you. What are you doing with your bag?"

Arthur was really minded to hide his satchel in the orchard. But he pretended that he only put it down in order to free his hand while he took a

bite of his sandwich ; though the truth was that he had small appetite for that, or anything.

"Give me a bite ; I'll help ye," said Stub.

Stub did, in fact, help Arthur to the extent of about half the sandwich ; the remainder of which the owner dropped into the satchel with his luncheon.

## CHAPTER II.

## STUB'S CANOE.

THEY hurried through the orchard; and now, sure enough, Arthur did begin to feel better. The sky was brightening, the early birds were singing, the air was deliciously fresh and sweet.

"We'll have a little trip, won't we, Stub?" he said more cheerfully.

"A little trip? A big trip," replied Stub. "I tell ye, Artie, we don't come back to this old one-hoss town, till we come with gold in our coffers, and our names in the papers. Do you remember the story of *Wild Will, the Boy-Ranger of the Brig Brazos*? How he came home with a long beard, and a lasso, and a gold-mounted saddle, and astonished the natives, who hadn't seen him since he was knee-high to a grasshopper; how he scattered the double-eagles, and made things hum gener'ly!"

"He made his money by defending the rich old Spanish ranch-man against forty brigands," said

Arthur, resorting to the sandwich again; "and then by buying herds of cattle. That was a splendid story. But I don't suppose we shall find any rich ranch-man to defend, or herds of cattle to buy."

"Maybe not," Stub admitted. "But *something* will happen. Something always does happen, you know, to boys that go into things with a vim. There was *Left-handed Luke, the Lion-hearted Lad lost on Labrador*. It didn't seem as if anything but bad luck *could* happen to *him*. But when he took possession of the abandoned wreck, fitted her up, hired the wild Esquimaux to help him, and came home from his cruise with a cargo of eider-down and seal-skins, and drew his check for forty thousand dollars to free his brother from prison, after that very brother had been the cruel means of driving Luke away from home, — then you see how it was!"

"Yes; *Left-handed Luke* was superb!" said Arthur, who was feeling better still, having got the last of the sleep out of him, and the last of the sandwich in. "Then there was *Little Whiffet, the Grocer's son, of Gotham*; didn't he make things lively, though?"

"Oh, I don't think much of him; he got his

money by marrying a rich heiress ! ” replied Stub, scornfully.

“ Yes ; but how did he come to marry her ? By saving her life three times ; once from the roof of a nine-story mansion, which was all on fire below, and he went to her rescue on the telegraph wires ; once from a band of ruffians, when he shot six of them with their own pistols ; and once by jumping from the ferry-boat after her, and saving her from a watery grave, when she had thrown herself overboard to get free from the rich count her folks had ordered her to marry. I say, *Little Whiffet* earned *his* money ? What are you laughing at ? ”

“ To think what the folks ’ll say when they find how completely we have fooled ’em ! ” said Stub, shaking his close-cropped head, and chuckling. “ Going a-fishing ! So we are ; but it’ll be some time before we bring our strings home. They’ll wonder ! There’ll be talk about us for one while ! ”

“ I’m afraid they’ll think we’re drowned,” said Arthur, conscience-smitten.

“ Let ’em ! ” said Stub, gleefully. “ We’ll get up a first-class mystery, like that which shrouded the fate of *Sol Slasher*, the *Wild Young Waterman of Weehawken*. His body was found three different times, and all the while he was disguised

as the *Captain of the Mad Cruiser of the Cape*, saving people's lives, making poor folks's fortunes, and laughing at his own funerals ! ”

“ If we could turn up unexpectedly at last, like him ! ” exclaimed Arthur, trying to forget the trouble which he knew his going would bring to all his friends.

“ Oh, we'll do that,” said Stub. “ All I'm afraid of is, they'll suspect something when they see my canoe is gone. Didn't I have a time, though, getting her over to the river, after dark, last night ! ”

“ How did you do it ? ”

“ Just as I told you I was going to ; set her on to the two hind wheels of my old wagon and pushed her ahead of me. It made me think of *The Boy Hunter of the Great Lakes* ; but then he always had an Indian chief or two that he forced to carry his canoe for him. ”

Stub burst into a laugh, as he went on :

“ Little the folks thought what I was building that craft for, using up all the barrel-hoops I could rake together, and covering 'em with the old sail, then clapping on two coats of paint ! We can go down the river in her to the harbor, and then all over the world, if we want to. ”

"You don't catch me going out to sea in her!" said Arthur.

"Why not, in fair weather?" cried Stub. "We'll hail some big ship, and make 'em take us aboard; then, hurrah for adventures!"

The canoe was found hidden among some willows on the bank of the river, where Stub had left it the night before. It was a funny-looking craft to set out on so grand an expedition in. The barrel-hoops showed through the painted canvas like the ribs of some starved creature reduced to skin and bone; and the two ends stuck up out of the water, after it was afloat, in a comical fashion.

But Stub was proud of his work, and he praised it continually while they were packing their bundles in the two elevated ends.

"Now, you see," he said, "if she *should* leak a little, they'll keep dry."

"But *we'll* get wet," objected Arthur, as he carefully got into the deeper part of the boat, following Stub's directions, and sat in the bottom.

"Oh, who cares for a little water?" said the heroic Stub. "Now sit right there, and don't lean on the sides one way or the other, or over she goes! That's it; Indian-fashion."

Stub also got in, carefully balancing the canoe, and wielded the paddle.

With the current in their favor, they glided rapidly between the grassy flats and alder-fringed banks, around curves, and under the railroad-bridge, just as an early train went thundering over them.

"Lucky we are under the bridge," said Stub, "for there are market-men in that train who might know us. Folks at home think we are catching perch out of Lommond's pond, by this time!"

And he laughed at the pleasant mistake.

But Arthur could not help having some more serious thoughts.

Dinner-time would come, and he would not return. Then his mother would begin to grow anxious. His father would laugh at her, and his sister would say, "Artie can take care of himself." But at length they too would become alarmed at his long absence. It would be discovered that he had taken his bag, and left his fishing-clothes at home. His sister would run over to Mrs. Culbert's to learn if the boys had been heard from. Then it would be night. No boys yet! Search and inquiry would follow; his father, with some of the neighbors, may be, hurrying to the pond, with lanterns, shouting and listening. Then —



But Artie did not like to think of what would happen then. He was not a hard-hearted boy, and he tried to shut out from his mind the terror and distress he was leaving behind him.

Meanwhile the swift river was bearing them away.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE VOYAGE DOWN THE RIVER.

EVERY mile or two of their voyage, the boys had to haul their canoe ashore and empty the water out.

Stub had provided himself with a block of wood to sit on; but Artie had to squat on his bare heels, in the leakiest part. The constant danger of an upset, if he leaned one way or the other, did not add to the comfort, if it did to the romance, of the situation.

"I shouldn't like to go round the world in this style, Stub!" he said with a sorry grin. "I'm glad nobody sees us! If I kneel, or sit down, I get wet; and my legs do ache awfully!"

"Who's going round the world in this style, anyway?" Stub retorted. "It's a good canoe, and you needn't abuse it."

Seeing how sensitive he was on that subject, Artie said, while he winced at the cramps in his legs,—

"Yes, it's awfully nice! just the thing! But I should like it better if I had a dry seat. You couldn't lend me your block for a little while, could you?"

"Not while I paddle, no, *sir!*" Stub replied. "Why don't you find something yourself? Jerk a picket off'm that fence!"

He ran the canoe ashore for the purpose. Artie stepped out, glad to straighten his limbs, but doubtful about his right to help himself to pickets.

Stub urged him on, however, and he remembered that the boy-heroes he had read about were never much troubled by scruples of that sort. So he started for the fence.

To keep their shoes and stockings dry, the boys had pulled them off and stowed them away with their bundles in the upturned ends of the canoe. Artie was not used to going with bare feet, and he had to pick his way carefully over the tussocks of the shore.

Stub called out to him to hurry, Artie reached the fence, laid hold of a paling, and tugged away at it. Just then a dog dashed down through a garden beyond, and flew with such sudden onset and terrific yelps against the fence, that poor Artie

recoiled, and went tumbling backwards down the bank.

Scrambling to his feet, he ran to the canoe with the fleetness of a deer, ludicrously in contrast with the extremely cautious tread of his advance. The dog did not follow, but remained barking on the other side of the fence. That, in Stub's eyes, added to the scenic effect of Artie's headlong flight, at which he laughed until he was near falling over into the water.

Artie could not be induced to go back for the pailing, and he sulkily threatened to quit the canoe and his companion altogether. He was deeply chagrined at his misadventure, knowing very well that the smallest of his boy-heroes, even *Little Whiffet, the Grocer's son, of Gotham*, would never have run from a dog in that way.

Stub coaxed him, however, and picked up a piece of driftwood, which he placed in the leaky bottom, declaring that it made a seat equal to any cushioned pew in church.

Artie was finally induced to try it; partly, perhaps, because he was afraid of the dog if he should remain ashore; and the canoe resumed its voyage.

They passed farms, meadows, a town with boat-houses and wharves, and then the river went wind-

ing a long way through grassy flats, from which a pale steam rose on the morning sun.

Meanwhile the current slackened; and at last the river lay quite still between muddy banks.

"It's low tide now," said Stub, "but it will be coming in soon, and we must be out of the way of it."

He plied his paddle. It was a double paddle, having a blade at each end. He dipped it first on one side and then on the other, sending the canoe lightly forward at each stroke. The water all the time kept dripping from the alternately lifted blades along the handle to his hands, thence down his sleeves, and dropping on his knees. But Stub didn't mind that.

The tide soon met them. But by that time the river had spread out into an arm of the bay which flashed and sparkled in the freshening sea-breeze, under a bright morning sky.

There were railroads crossing this expanse of water, not on simple bridges, but on rows of piles. Trains of cars passing on these elevated tracks threw the shadows of their smoke-clouds across the bright water.

"Running away ain't so bad after all, is it?" said Stub, as they passed between the slimy legs

of one of those interminable bridges, or rested in its cool shade.

"It will do for a change," said Arthur.

He was feeling better again, having forgiven Stub for laughing at him. But suddenly a look of pain crossed his face. He couldn't help thinking of the folks at home.

They glided on. And now the broad river with its oozy flats lay between two great cities, united by an immensely long bridge, over which carriages and horse-cars were passing.

The breeze was blowing strong; and soon the canoe began to toss upon waves rolling in from the harbor beyond.

"This don't look like going very far out to sea!" said Arthur, timidly grasping the sides of the frail craft.

"Oh, don't you be a 'fraid-cat!" cried Stub. "Do you think *Left-Handed Luke, the Lion-hearted Lad lost on Labrador*, would have minded a little dash of salt spray? or would *The Wild Young Waterman of Weehawken*?"

But having passed the bridge, and met the wake of a ferry-boat, which nearly upset them, even the heart of Stub began to quail.

The wind was still rising, and the whole harbor,

as far as they could see, looked rough and threatening.

"Of course," said Stub, "nobody ever thought of going around the world in this thing! What do you say?" poising his paddle.

He wished to throw the responsibility of their retreat upon Arthur, and Arthur made just the reply he wished.

"I think we'd better get back into still water as quick as we can," he said, pale with alarm.

"Well, if you say so. I don't care for the danger," said Stub; "but it's about time to haul up and get the water out."

And he paddled back into the current, which was now running strong up the river.

The harbor was a fine sight, with its dashing waves, ferry-boats, and tugs, and bellying white sails in the sun; and the boys ardently wished that, instead of their canoe, they had one of the fine yachts moored near the bridge.

"*Sol Slasher* himself couldn't have done anything with a tub like this!" said Stub.

He had never quite entertained the rash idea of actually putting out to sea in his ridiculous little craft. But he had told Artie that very likely they might take it on board the ship they

sailed in, and use it for exploring creeks and shoals.

"We might go back with the tide, and get home at noon, without letting anybody know we ever intended to run away," timidly suggested Arthur.

"So we might, if we was a couple of fools," said his companion. "I've a better idea than that."



## CHAPTER IV.

## THE ADVENTURE WITH THE CLAM-DIGGERS.

STUB paddled back to where they had seen some young fellows digging clams on a mud-bank. They were just retiring, driven off by the tide. Stub hailed them.

"Hallo there ! want to buy a canoe?"

"Not such a canoe as that," said one, standing with the tide about his bare feet, and grinning saucily.

"What's the matter with the canoe?" cried Stub.

"She's jest a splendid boat ! We've been out in the harbor with her, and she rides the waves, I tell ye ! See how she goes !"

And he turned the canoe rapidly with strokes of his paddle.

"What'll ye take?" cried another of the boys, a tall boy in rolled-up trowsers and torn straw hat.

"Five dollars," said Stub.

"I'll give ye five cents," said the tall boy.

"Five cents!" jeered Stub. "I mean business. It will be jest the ticket for you to go clam-digging in."

"I'll give you ten," said the tall boy.

"Ten dollars?" said Stub.

"No, ten cents," said the tall boy.

Considering that he was trifled with, Stub indulged in some wholly irrelevant remarks regarding the tall boy's tattered hat and bare legs. The tall boy sent back some hard words, followed speedily by a still harder clam.

The last missile spattered some drops of water on Artie's ear, as it went whizzing past.

"Hallo! you've dropped something," said Stub, as coolly as he could, at the same time paddling rapidly out of range. "Hit 'em again!" he cried, and lifted his paddle as if to knock a second clam, that described its long arc over the water. "You must throw better balls than that if you want me to bat!"

His bold and defiant air seemed to produce a good effect on the enemy. The clams and hard words stopped flying, and another of the diggers, — a short, stout boy, — stepped forward amicably, and asked to look at the canoe.

"Won't ye fling no more clams?" said Stub.

"Nary clam," said the short, stout boy.

So Stub paddled back to the mud-bank, saying in a whisper to Artie, that he wished he had first had a chance to get the water out.

"Oh, she leaks!" cried all the clam-diggers in chorus.

"None to hurt," said Stub. "Jest a few drops; there's a little pin-hole somewhere."

"Turn her up here and le's see," said the short, stout boy.

Stub complied, Arthur holding the shoes and bundles while the canoe was drawn up and tipped over on the flat.

Under pretence of examining the property before purchasing, the clam-diggers now began to handle it rather roughly.

"See here!" Stub said to the tall boy, "stop pressing on those ribs, you'll break 'em!" Then to the short, stout boy: "Don't stick your toes through that canvas, I tell ye. Stop!"

The result was a squabble. Nobody knew just how it began; but Stub came out of it with a bloody nose, and the canoe with several crushed ribs and a hole in the side which you could have thrust your hat through.

The clam-diggers ran off, laughing derisively,

while Stub caught up his paddle and hurled it after them. It fell short, and remained sticking up in the mud like the tail of some disappearing monster, to the great merriment of the fugitives, lugging away their baskets and brandishing their clam-hoes.

"Why didn't you pitch in?" Stub demanded, turning furiously upon Arthur.

"I didn't know what to do with these things," said Arthur, standing helpless with his arms full.

"Dropped 'em!" said Stub, in a rage which had small respect for syntax.

"In the mud? and have had 'em kicked into the river?" cried Arthur. "They were just ready to do it. Besides, if I had pitched in, more of them would have pitched in too, and there were six against us."

Stub looked revengefully after the retreating clam-diggers, then ruefully at his poor little smashed and torn canoe, which it had taken so many barrel-hoops and odd hours to construct, — a wreck past repair.

"Never mind," he muttered. "We couldn't have gone much further in her, any way. *They* shan't have her to fix up, that's one thing sure!"

He then smashed some more of the ribs, and kicked the shapeless mass off into the water.

"Is there much blood on my face?" he appealed, in a more humble spirit, to his companion.

"Yes; and your clothes are all spattered with mud."

Arthur watched him, as he stooped to wash off the stains of battle in the rising tide, and said what comforting words he could.

But he could not help thinking, all the while, that Stub had cut but a sorry figure, and wondering how *Wild Will*, or *Red Ned*, the *Boy Hunter of the Great Lakes*, would have managed to gain glory from the adventure. Success always seemed so easy to the heroes of *The Boys' Own!*

"Something 'll happen, something *must* happen, to pay for this!" said Stub, with the old swaggering shake of his head, as they walked off across the muddy flats, towards the town.

In fact something did happen before long.

## CHAPTER V.

## WHAT HAPPENED.

IT was afternoon. The two boys were sauntering slowly along a narrow city street, apparently looking for some place of rest and refreshment.

They were, in truth, weary and hungry enough, having eaten their luncheon long ago, and wandered about the wharves and public places, until the adventure was losing its novelty and becoming tiresome.

Arthur was not altogether sorry for this; hoping that after another dull hour or two, he might be able to persuade Stub to return home.

As they paused doubtfully on a corner, a young man advanced smilingly towards them, looking so much as if he would like to oblige them in some way, that Stub said,—

“Where’s the best place along here for a feller to get a good square meal?”

“A restaurant, you want a restaurant,” said the

young man ; " I thought that was what you were looking for. I'll show you."

He was so very polite and friendly, that he went all the way with them to a dining-room in the next street. Arthur thanked him for his trouble and kindness.

" Not the slightest trouble in the world," said the obliging young man. " I was just looking for a place where I could get a bill changed. I don't suppose *you* could change it?"

" How big a bill is it?" said Stub.

" Only twenty dollars," said the obliging young man, putting his fingers into his vest-pocket.

" No, we can't change a bill of that size, not quite," said Stub. " And I don't know as I should dare to if I could ; might be counterfeit,"—giving Artie a nudge.

" There's where you're right," replied the young man, without appearing to take the least offence. " There's so many counterfeits, and so many counterfeiters and sharpers in these large cities, that a fellow has got to keep his eyes peeled. It's just possible I can get my change in here ; fact, I may as well dine here as anywhere, as it is about dinner-time."

So saying, he entered and took a seat at a table opposite the boys.

"You're from the country, I see," he remarked, looking blandly across at them while they were waiting for their orders. "Travelling far?"

"We mean to see a little of the world before we go back, you bet!" said Stub.



"That's right. But I advise you to take good care of yourselves; look out particularly for confidence men and swindlers of all sorts."

"Oh, they can't take *me* in!" Stub exclaimed, with his swaggering head-shake.



"I see you're pretty shrewd!" The young man smiled approvingly. "But there are some tricks — I was taken in by one myself, last week," he added, in a burst of frankness.

The boys desired to hear about it; and he had so amusing a story to tell of his own innocence and the shrewdness of the two men who had got his money, that they had a good laugh at his expense.

"There's always two of them," he said, not in the least offended by their merriment. "Now, how do I know but that you two — but I know by your looks that you are honest fellows!"

The conversation so pleasantly begun was continued with great freedom during the repast.

"I am travelling myself," said the young man, after drawing out from the boys something of their past history and present intentions. "There's nothing so delightful as seeing the world; and I am seeing it in the most free and easy, romantic way."

The boys were eager to learn how that was.

"In a yacht," said the young man, with a proud smile. "A friend of mine owns one. We have been off in her all summer. Just now we are going a-fishing — mackerel-fishing; it's the greatest

sport in the world, as well as the most profitable. We expect to bring home barrels of fish, and get a good price for them."

"That's just what I should like!" said Arthur, the polite young man's society and a good bit of roast lamb fast reviving his spirits.

"Ah, of course you would! anybody would!" said the young man gayly.

"How did you get your chance?" Stub inquired.

"I made the owner's acquaintance — very much as I am making yours now," replied the young man. "We took a fancy to each other; he invited me for a trip, and of course I wasn't such a fool as to refuse."

"I should hope not!" said Arthur. "I wish I could get such a chance!"

"That would be easy enough, for my friend has told me I could invite a friend or two; the more the merrier, you know; and the more hands the more fish. I suppose you wouldn't object to hauling in a few mackerel, would you?"

"I should smile!" laughed Stub.

"But the trouble is," the young man went on, "our yacht is away down East. I had business that took me up to town; but I am going back to-night, in the Landport steamer, and I shall tread

the deck of the *Jolly Rover* at half-past ten o'clock to-morrow morning."

"The *Jolly Rover* is a splendid name for a yacht!" exclaimed Arthur.

"And a splendid yacht she is! And splendid fellows we all are that sail the glad waters of the bright blue sea in her."

This touch of poetry made Arthur's eyes glisten. And Stub said, eagerly,—

"How much does it cost to go down in the steamer?"

"Not much; only a dollar, unless you take a state-room. But I shall take a state-room," said this friendliest of young men, "and I would willingly share it with you, if you wanted to make the trip."

If the boys wanted to make the trip! Why, it seemed just the luck they were looking for. The polite young man seemed equally satisfied.

"I'm so glad I fell in with you!" he said. "We'll look around the city a little—there's a good deal I'd like to show you in this old town—then go aboard the steamboat."

The boys had taken out their money to pay for their dinner. The polite young man reached for it.

"I'm going to the desk to get my bill changed," he remarked, "and I may as well pay for all at once."

He gathered up the dinner-tickets, and proceeded to the desk.

"Ain't he a splendid fellow!" whispered Stub.

"I hope they are all like him on board the yacht," said Arthur.

"Didn't I tell you something would happen?" chuckled Stub.

The young man presently returned, with the money and tickets still in his hand.

"They can't change my bill," he explained; "and if you could lend me enough to pay for my dinner till I can get change outside — only forty-five cents — thank you ever so much!" he said, as Arthur handed out a half-dollar.

"He'll pay you back," said Stub, confidently, after the young man had once more started for the desk.

"Of course he will!" said the elated Arthur. "But what if he don't? I guess we can afford to pay for his dinner, since he is going to give us a trip in the *Jolly Rover*!"

"I should smile!" laughed Stub.

The stranger, after paying at the desk, said

nothing about the five cents left over from Arthur's half-dollar, but remarked gayly, as he came back to his new acquaintance :—

"Now for a little sight-seeing! We're three *Jolly Rovers!* That's what we call ourselves on board the yacht, and you belong to us already."

"*Jolly Rovers!* that's a glorious title!" said Arthur, gleefully, as they all went out together.

## CHAPTER VI.

## A LITTLE SIGHT-SEEING.

THIS is going to be my treat," said the original *Jolly Rover*, to his new recruits. "I pay all expenses, understand, as soon as I get my bill changed."

"I think we can pay our share," replied Arthur, who did not like to be outdone in generosity by any one.

"We'll see about that," said the young man with a smile. "There is one thing, however, I *will* let you pay, since it is an expense necessary to be incurred on your account."

"Some little thing, I suppose," said Stub, who was not so free-handed as Arthur.

"Oh, a mere trifle; and if you will permit me, I shall be happy to assume even that. We must do everything in an open, manly way," said *Jolly Rover*, Number One.

The other *Jolly Rovers* agreed with him; and Arthur asked what particular open and manly thing he alluded to.

"A telegram," he replied; "we must send a despatch the first move."

"To our folks?" said Arthur, with a suddenly startled conscience.

"O dear, no! Your folks can take care of themselves."

"I should smile!" muttered Stub, with a dogged head-shake.

"To my friend," added the young man. "He is laying in stores for the trip this very afternoon. And if you are going in the yacht with us — you are hearty young fellows, — two more mouths to provide for — that is all right, of course," he rattled on, "but my friend ought to know."

"That's reasonable," said Arthur; while the more cautious Stub reserved his opinion.

"And the only way to let him know, is to telegraph," continued the young man. "These little courtesies of life are worth all they cost, and we make a great mistake when we neglect them. I should be ashamed to set foot on the deck of the *Jolly Rover* to-morrow morning, with two young strangers, without taking the trouble to forewarn my friend by a message over the wires. That's the way the *Jolly Rovers* do things."

Arthur said he thought it a good way; but Stub

remained silent. Their guide stopped before the door of a telegraph office, putting out his hand to them with a bland smile.

"Only half a dollar; the cost of a message," he remarked.

As Stub, having reserved his opinion on the subject, now also reserved his money, Arthur once more put his hand into his pocket and handed out the required half-dollar.

The young man took it, went in, scribbled something hurriedly at a desk, and then appeared to transact some business with a clerk through an inner window.

"There!" said he, coming out with an air of satisfaction, "my friend will get that in about half an hour, and know I am bringing two *Jolly Rovers* down with me."

This business settled, he proposed that they should visit the steamboat, where the boys could leave their satchels in the baggage-room, and be freed from the trouble of lugging them about.

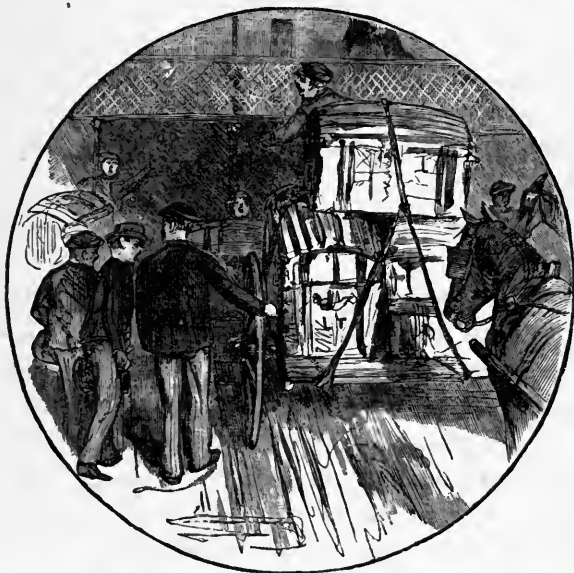
This plan struck them favorably, and they proceeded to the boat. Passing a wagon loaded with trunks, under the wharf-shed, the young man suddenly exclaimed,—

"I'm glad to see that!"



Being asked what, he pointed out a trunk conspicuously marked with the initials *L. T.*

"That's my baggage," he explained. "I ordered it sent down from my hotel; but I didn't expect it would get here quite so soon. A traveller can't



be too careful in keeping track of his baggage," he added, philosophically.

Arthur asked if those were his initials.

"Certainly! Haven't I told you my name? *L. T.* — Lewis Thomas," said the young man,

tapping the trunk familiarly. "There's all sorts of knick-knacks for the yacht in there," he added, with a smile full of promise of good things.

"I don't know but *we* ought to lay in a few things," said Arthur.

"It would be well, if you were not in the hands of friends," Lewis Thomas replied, magnanimously. "I propose to take care of you."

"Ain't he a generous fellow?" Arthur said to Stub, as they followed him across the gangway of the boat.

"Tip-top!" replied Stub, triumphantly. "Didn't I tell ye?"

Their handbags disposed of, the boys looked about the boat awhile with their new friend, and then went off with him to make the most of their leisure time before the starting of the steamer.

The sight-seeing which ensued proved to be rather wearisome, at least to Arthur. Lewis Thomas seemed to have no definite points of interest in view; and if he had not been so very generous a fellow, he might have been suspected of trying to tire out his young friends and get rid of them. He led them in an objectless sort of way from place to place. He darted quickly through alleys, and made feeble excuses for entering build-

ings where he had no business and there was nothing to be seen. Two or three times they might have lost sight of him but for the determined alertness of Stub. Once he actually got away from them in a large corner-block full of offices and passage-ways, and with entrances on two streets.

"He'll come back to us as soon as he gets his bill changed," said Arthur.

"Of course he will," Stub replied. "But in a big city like this, there's no harm in making sure. You wait at this door, while I run back to the one where we came in."

A few minutes later, as Lewis Thomas was gliding quietly out, he had the pleasant surprise of seeing Arthur start up before him.

"Hallo!" said Lewis Thomas. "I've been looking for you everywhere!"

"We've been looking for *you*," said Arthur.

"You couldn't have lost me," said Lewis Thomas, when they had rejoined Stub. "But if we *should* happen to get separated, we shall meet, you know, on the steamboat. We must go where our baggage goes."

"We'd better keep together, anyhow," said Stub.

"We're all agreed in that," Lewis Thomas cordially replied. "Come, boys! We'll go now and see the Two-Headed Sheep and the Calf with Five Legs."

This edifying show was held in a shanty erected for the purpose on a vacant lot near by. The rough boards of the building were covered with pictorial advertisements of the marvels within, a fife and drum were playing before the door, and a showman on the street, in a loud voice and with vehement gestures, was inviting the public to enter.

"Can you break a twenty-dollar bill?" Lewis Thomas, with his fingers in his vest-pocket, inquired of this noisy individual.

"The doorkeeper can, if it's a good one. Pass in! pass in! The most moral and elevating show now going!" the showman called out to other passers-by. "Here's your wonderful Two-Headed Sheep, gentlemen, and the astonishing Calf with five Legs, with other beautiful monstrosities!"

Lewis Thomas was about to offer his bill to the doorkeeper, but on reflection, remarked confidentially to his companions, "I'm a little afraid to take change for a double-X at such a place as this; there's so much bad money afloat! If you'll have

the kindness to lend me — let's see — three tens — thirty cents."

Again Arthur handed him, with cheerful readiness, a half-dollar. This Lewis Thomas handed to the doorkeeper, and receiving back two dimes, with serene absent-mindedness dropped them into his own pocket.

"Oh, excuse me!" he said immediately, appearing to recover his self-possession, and reaching down into the depths where they had disappeared. "But never mind just now. I'll make this all right with you when we settle."

And he began to talk so glibly about the wonders of the show, that Arthur had no chance to insist on having back his twenty cents, even if he had wished to do so.

The Two-Headed Sheep and the Calf with Five Legs proved disappointing; nor was a Double Chicken the most exciting object the boys had ever seen; all these beautiful monstrosities being, not alive, as they had expected to find them, but stuffed, and quite possibly manufactured.

They afterwards visited other places, which turned out to be so little interesting that they might have expressed some dissatisfaction with their guide, under different circumstances. His

conduct was certainly, in some points, open to criticism ; but they naturally felt like excusing a great deal in a person who was doing so much for them. Arthur, for one, was glad enough when the time came for their return to the boat. Lewis Thomas led the way in high spirits.

"We'll be in time to get good seats on the deck," he remarked. "That's very important ; for it's a fine sight, going out of the harbor at sunset."

## CHAPTER. VII.

## ON BOARD THE STEAMER.

THEY found the wharf-shed and the lower deck of the steamboat a scene of bustle and preparation. Passengers were arriving, and freight and baggage were being hurriedly taken aboard.

"I want to see where they have stowed my trunk," said L. Thomas; "then we'll look out for seats. Ah, here it is, buried in this stack of baggage. All right! It won't be easy for anybody to steal that. Now come on!"

They found many of the best seats already taken, but managed to secure places in what L. T. declared a very choice situation, against the rail over the stern.

"This is superb!" he said. "We shall command a fine outlook over the water. It is going to be a beautiful evening; glorious sunset, delightful breeze and moonlight! Think of that, my *Jolly Rovers!* Moonlight on the waters!"

"This is better than squatting on my heels in

your canoe, Stub!" said Arthur, enjoying his rest, the harbor-breeze, and happy anticipations of the voyage.

"Canoe was well enough to start with — till something better turned up," Stub replied, "as I knew there would."

"The yacht will be as much pleasanter than this as this is pleasanter than your canoe," said Lewis Thomas. "We are lucky to get these seats! This is a favorite spot in fine weather, and everybody, you see, is crowding up here."

"I didn't suppose there would be so many passengers," said Arthur.

"That reminds me!" exclaimed L. T., appearing suddenly to be struck by an anxious thought.

"What is it?" Stub inquired.

"State-rooms! There'll be a rush for 'em, and I shan't be able to get one if I don't look out! We're all interested in that," added L. Thomas, in his generous way. "I am to pay for it, and you are to occupy it with me, you know."

"How do you get it?" Arthur asked.

"Pay for it and get the key at the captain's office, which will be open as soon as the boat starts. That will be in five minutes now. See here, my *Jolly Rovers!* we must look out for that!"



"How?" said Stub.

"Suppose you go to the captain's office, buy our tickets and engage the state-room, while your friend and I remain here and keep the seats," L. T. suggested, with a sweet smile.

"Oh, I don't know the ropes!" said Stub, fearing he might be called upon for an outlay of money, the famous twenty-dollar bill not having yet been changed.

"It's perfectly simple, perfectly easy!" said L. T. "There'll be a big crowd; everybody pushing to be first. You mustn't mind the crush. Elbow your way; look out somebody don't pick your pocket or grab your money when you are paying at the office. Won't you try it?"

"I should smile!" Stub answered, with his determined head-shake.

"Then perhaps this *Jolly Rover* will?" and L. T. turned his persuasive smile on Arthur.

But Arthur, having heard what he would have to go through, shrank from so grave a responsibility.

"Well," said L. T., "then I shall have to go myself. I should have proposed that in the first place, but I was afraid of losing my seat."

"We'll keep it for you," said Stub.

"Be sure you do. And don't move from this spot. Let's see!" said L. T., rising. "Your tickets will be a dollar a-piece, mine will be a dollar, and the state-room two dollars, that's five dollars. Now, if I had a five-dollar bill, it would be the safest and most convenient thing in such a crowd."

Stub looked at Arthur, Arthur looked at Stub. Their friend and guide continued: "After the crowd scatters a little, I shall get my bill changed at the office and square all accounts."

"Hand him a five," said Stub to Arthur. "Then he will only have to settle with you."

"I've only a five-dollar bill left," said Arthur, handing it out with some reluctance.

"But Stub will owe you a dollar," said L. T., "and I shall owe you — figger it up while I'm gone! I must hurry! Thanks!"

And seizing Arthur's solitary bank-bill, he quickly disappeared in the crowd.

"That whistle must be for starting," said Stub. "You'll see her move now! What makes you look so sober? You'll get your money back."

"I wasn't thinking of that," replied Arthur.

Then, as Stub insisted on knowing what ailed him, he confessed: "Our folks must have found out by this time."

"Of course they have. But that can't be helped. See! we're off!" said Stub. "We're *Jolly Rovers*, remember!"

The steamer swung around, the great paddles moved and stopped and moved again; the engineer's bell tinkled fitfully; the last line was swung off; the wharves began to recede, and a boiling and flashing wake lay under the lofty stern. In the pleasant excitement of the start, Arthur forgot all about the folks at home.

"It reminds me," he said, "of *Saguenay Sam*, the *Young Caribou-Hunter of the Canadian Wilds*. Do you remember how his friend took him on board the steamboat?"

"Where the Duke's family was," Stub rejoined. "And the Duke's daughter fell overboard, and *Saguenay Sam* plunged in after her, and everybody thought they was both drowned."

"But he had swum ashore with her," said Arthur; "and the *Tall Trapper of the Tamaracks* received them in his hut, and they afterwards got married, and *Saguenay Sam* became *Duke of Dowermere*. I'd like to rescue a" —

Perceiving that their conversation was in danger of being overheard, Arthur blushed and became silent.

"It's nothing to swim ashore with a girl who will do just what you tell her to, as the Duke's daughter did," said Stub, in a low, confidential tone. "I'd like no better fun."

"She just took hold of his hunting-belt, while he struck out," replied Arthur. "If such a chance should come to me" —

He cast his eye around on the lady passengers, as if to choose in his mind, among the youngest and prettiest, the one he would like best to rescue in the heroic style of *Saguenay Sam*.

"Seems to me it's about time for Lewis Thomas to come back and take his seat," remarked Stub. "But I suppose he found a crowd ahead of him at the ticket-office."

"Or he may be waiting for a good chance to change his bill," said Arthur.

"I thought one time he didn't mean to change it at all," said Stub, laughing. "He's a queer fellow!"

"Well," replied Arthur, "I believe I could have got it changed, if it had been mine, two or three times while he was saying so much about it. But I wasn't going to say anything as long as he was taking us down to the *Jolly Rover*."

"That's jest it," said Stub. "I thought if he



"I'M GOING TO FIND HIM." Page 61.



did that, I didn't care much what else he did. Was you suspicious one while he might be trying to give us the slip?"

"What he had promised did seem almost too good to be true," Arthur admitted. "But there's his trunk. I thought of that."

"Yes," returned Stub. "And when I saw that on board, in a pile of twenty, I knew he was all right. But what *does* keep him so?"

The city lay by this time far back, dim and cool, in the sunset light, and the foaming wake was stretching rapidly out towards the open sea. Still no Lewis Thomas appeared.

"It was clever in him to offer us places in his state-room," said Arthur. "I shall want to turn in pretty early to-night, if it is moonlight."

"Look here!" suddenly exclaimed Stub, starting up. "I don't believe there'll be any danger of losing our seats. I'm going to find him!"

Something in his manner startled Arthur. He had all along felt some misgivings regarding Lewis Thomas, but had refused to entertain them in his own most secret thoughts. Now, however, he became suddenly anxious.

"You don't suppose" — he began, catching Stub by the arm.

"I don't suppose nothing," said Stub, whose education had not carried him beyond an occasional double negative. "But if he's aboard this boat, I'm going to find him."

"*If he's aboard this boat,*" Arthur repeated to himself when left alone to guard the seats. "Why, he *must* be aboard! *Of course* he's aboard!" he said, trying to quiet his fears by thinking of the trunk which L. T. had pointed out as his own.

This *Jolly Rover* was certainly somewhat eccentric, and perhaps he might neglect to "square accounts" in the magnanimous manner he had proposed. But that he had leaped ashore as the steamer left the wharf, abandoning his friends and his trunk, Arthur did not, would not, could not for a moment believe.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## L. T.'S TRUNK.

ARE all these seats engaged?"

While Arthur was anxiously awaiting the return of his friends, and guarding their seats on the stern of the steamer, a young lady in a brown travelling suit advanced and smilingly addressed to him this question. Arthur, who was spreading himself out in a rather ridiculous way to cover the space, drew himself hastily together.

"I am keeping them for my friends," he said. "But you — you can have *my* seat."

"Oh, thank you!" said the lady. "I will take neither your seat nor theirs. But if you will permit me, I will rest here a minute and help you keep their places till they come."

Arthur had resolved not to give way, at least, without sturdy resistance, to anybody. While he aspired to do some heroic act, like the rescue of an heiress from a watery grave, he had cared

little who was kept standing by the enforcement of the *Jolly Rovers'* claims to seats. It had never yet occurred to him that true heroism, like charity and so many other things, begins at home, and does always, without pretence, the simple deed of courage and good-will which comes to hand.

But the smile and speech of this lady surprised him into an act of courtesy. She was not, perhaps, very handsome, but she had a kind face and a sympathetic voice, which not even *Saguenay Sam* nor *Left-Handed Luke*, the *Lion-Hearted Lad*, with all their hardihood, would have found it easy to resist.

She began a conversation with the freedom of an older person talking to a boy, and dropped some question regarding his journey. Arthur mentioned his intended trip on the *Jolly Rover*.

"Ah! that will be fine—a yacht voyage at this time of the year!" said the lady. "It is a good way for boys to spend their vacation. But you are very young. No doubt you are with older persons who know all about the management of a small vessel on our coast."

Arthur said, somewhat hesitatingly, that he supposed so.

"Your parents must have satisfied themselves

of that before they consented to let you go," said the sympathetic voice. "You have a mother?"

"Yes — certainly!" said Arthur, very red and embarrassed.

"She will be anxious about you, even if you are in the best of hands," the lady added. "No doubt you will write to her often and keep her mind as easy about you as possible."

Arthur felt that he was not telling exact truth when he replied, "I shall write as often as — as convenient."

"You must *make* it convenient!" said the lady, in a gentle, sweet tone. "Remember your friends at home, and think how glad they will always be to hear from you. No doubt you have taken with you some good books to read in your leisure hours."

Arthur remembered that Stub had brought away copies of *The Boys' Own*, containing, among other things, *Little Whiffet*, *the Grocer's Son*, of *Gotham*; *Wild Will*, *the Boy Ranger of the Brazos*; *Sol Slasher* and *Saguenay Sam*; which exciting stories they expected to read over again on their travels. But without entering into unnecessary particulars, he merely replied, —

"We intend to do some reading."

"That's right ! And when you return from your vacation, you will be prepared to take hold of your studies in school with fresh energy. In a few years you will probably go out in the world, where you will have to rely upon your own resources ; and now, you know, is the time to equip yourself for active life by acquiring a good education."

Arthur would have been ashamed to confess that he was already "out in the world," with a very poor equipment indeed of the sort she recommended. And knowing the prejudice of sober, elderly persons against the *Sol Slasher* and *Sauguenay Sam* ideas of life and its duties, he hung his head rather sheepishly and said nothing.

He was relieved to see Stub coming towards him. But he was not relieved to see Stub's snarled and perplexed features as he made his way, alone, through the throng on deck.

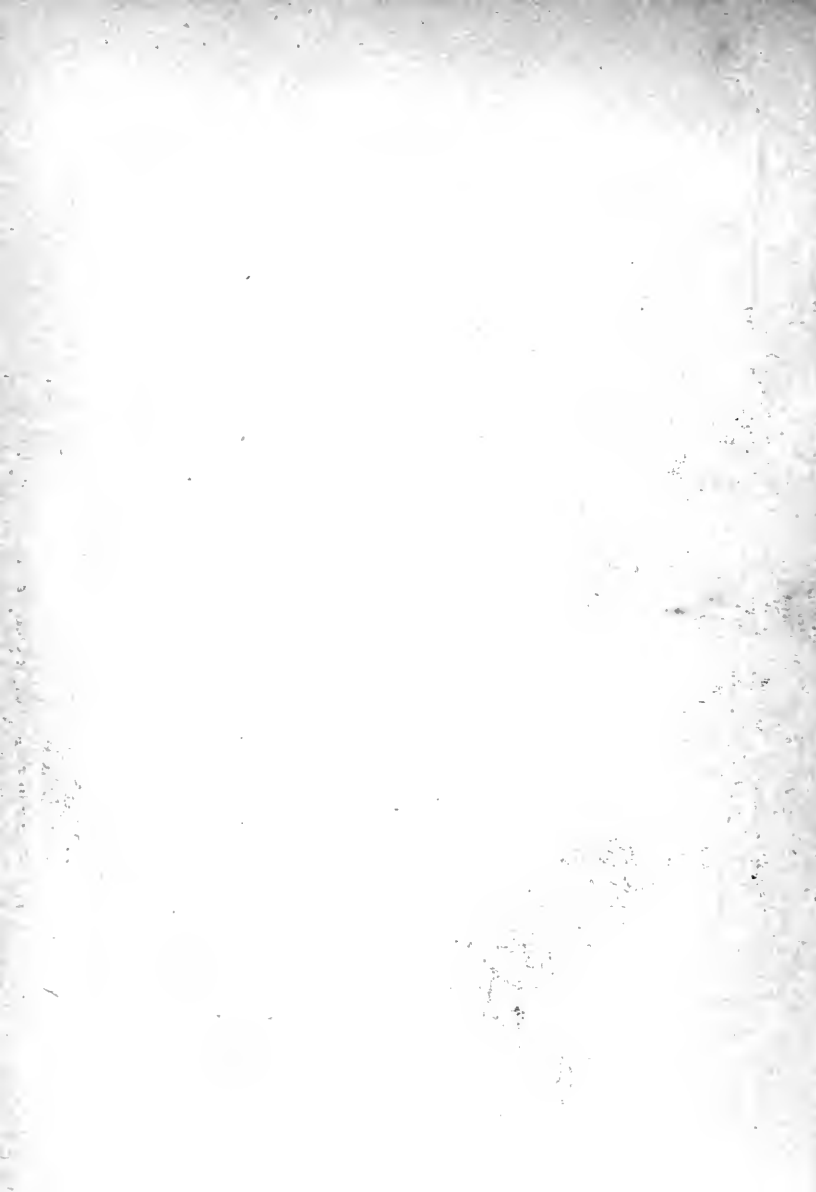
"Can't you find him?" Arthur eagerly inquired.

"I can't find him nowheres!" said Stub, whose double-negatives became numerous in times of excitement. "There ain't no crowd before the captain's office. I've looked there and everywhere!"

Arthur knew not what to say for a moment. Then he asked, "Did you see his trunk?"



HE WAS RELIEVED TO SEE STUB COMING TOWARDS HIM. Page 66.



"Yes, that's there," replied Stub. "But I'd like to know where *he* is?"

Hearing the boys' conversation and seeing how anxious they were, the friendly lady inquired if Arthur missed any of his friends.

"He doesn't come to us here, as he agreed to," he replied. "And he can't be found. But he must be aboard; his trunk is. He left us just as the boat started, and went to the office to buy tickets and secure a state-room."

"Very likely he is in the state-room now," she suggested, reassuringly.

"Must be!" said Stub. "But why does he leave us so long here? He's a queer fellow!"

"Have you any reason to think he would desert you?" she sympathizingly inquired.

"Not as I know on," said Stub, with a meaning look at Arthur.

"I don't know—exactly—why he should," said Arthur, confusedly.

"I'll go and look again," said Stub.

Just as he was starting, two officers of the boat appeared collecting fares and tickets. They asked for Stub's before they would let him pass.

"Our tickets," he explained, pointing out his companion, "have been bought and paid for,

but a friend of ours has 'em, and we can't find him."

"We haven't found him either," said the fare-taker. "Nobody has shown tickets for you two."

But after looking sharply at both boys, in a way which showed he meant to know them, he let Stub pass.

"Is *he* your friend?" the lady then asked, in a tone not highly complimentary to Master Culbert.

"Why not?" said Arthur, though he knew very well why not.

"I hope your other companion is older — a person whose society is calculated to improve you," she quietly replied. "Have you known them long?"

"I have known *him* a good while." Arthur indicated Stub by a glance. "We are neighbors."

"And the other?"

"I haven't known him quite so long."

Not quite so long indeed? Poor, blushing, distressed Arthur remembered that he had known Lewis Thomas about three or four hours.

"Has he shown himself a trustworthy person?" she then asked.

"I don't know. I hope so!" said Arthur, with a heart ready to burst.



"I see you are in some trouble," she remarked, after observing him closely for a moment. "I don't want to intrude upon it. But wouldn't you like to tell me about it?"

Arthur would indeed have liked to tell some one of whose kindness and good counsel he could have been assured. But how could he have a face to confess all, even to his folly in running away?

Being pressed in the gentlest manner, he explained that L. T. had agreed to take them on board the yacht, after a very brief acquaintance, and that, if he should fail them, their romantic scheme would fall through.

"Had he any motive for deceiving you?"

"I do not know of any."

"He did not borrow money of you, or get any other favors that this yacht-voyage was to pay for?"

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Arthur. "He did not expect us to pay for that. Though there was something — I loaned him a little," Arthur stammered, "and he took five dollars of mine when he went to buy the tickets."

Then the affair of the twenty-dollar bill, with L. T.'s transparent subterfuge and pretence flashed upon him; and a sudden trembling seized him.

"I am afraid you have fallen into the hands of a sharper," said the lady, compassionately.

"But he warned us against sharpers!" broke forth Arthur, with something like a sob.

"That may have been to throw you off your guard," she suggested.

"But there's his trunk!"

"Are you sure it is his?"

"It must be!" Arthur exclaimed. "It has his initials on it."

"How do you know they are his initials?"

"Why — he — he said so!"

"Did he say so, or give you his name, before or after he saw the trunk?"

Arthur was obliged to own that it was afterwards.

"What are the initials?" she asked.

He told her "L. T."

"A trunk with the initials *L. T.* on it!" said the lady. "Let me see it!"

Arthur had forgotten all about the danger of losing the seats when he started to show her the baggage claimed by his Jolly Rover. Meeting Stub on the way, he told him where they were going, and he accompanied them, not yet having discovered the missing man.

"Is *that* the trunk he claimed?" cried the lady, when it was shown to her.

"Yes," said Stub; "and he said it was full of knick-knacks for the yacht."

"He never saw the inside of that trunk in his life," she replied. "I am sorry to tell you, boys, that you have been shamefully cheated and deceived. Probably there is no more truth in anything he has told you than in what he said of this trunk."

"Why— isn't it his?" said Arthur, bewildered and incredulous.

"No, my poor boy!" she replied. "That trunk belongs to my uncle, Luther Talcott, who is travelling with me. I know it as well as I know my own."

This was overwhelming evidence. The boys could no longer have any doubt of the truth, which a very little experience of the world would have led them to suspect all along.

"He's a sneaking rascal!" said Stub, with a vindictive head-shake.

"He's made fools of *us*!" added Arthur, his shame and disappointment burning in his cheeks and trembling on his lips. "He has humbugged and cheated us, and run off with my money!"

"Here is my uncle!" said the lady. "Uncle Luther!"

She called to a quiet old gentleman, who at her request approached and identified the trunk. "That seems to be the article," he said, touching the initials *L. T.* with his cane.



The boys did not need this additional testimony. But it was a good starting-point for a brief statement of their case by the young lady.

"I noticed the rogue," he said, when she had finished. "I saw him when he came aboard with those boys, and looked at the trunks. I didn't know he was laying claim to mine. I saw him afterwards jump ashore just as the plank was hauled in."

"A rather short fellow, with a little beard on his upper lip, and a soiled paper collar?" Arthur asked.

"Yes; and ROGUE written in large letters all over him," replied the uncle. "It's too bad you should have been taken in by him. You actually gave him money to pay for your tickets?"

"And for his state-room," said Arthur; "and it was the last I had."

"See the captain, won't you, uncle?" said the niece, "and explain it to him. They ought not to be made to pay again."

"I think I can arrange it," he replied. "I know the captain very well. I'll see you again, boys," he said, walking off.

## CHAPTER IX.

## A GOOD AND A BAD FRIEND.

THE niece then said to Arthur, "Let your friend wait for my uncle here. I want to talk with you a minute."

She took him to a sofa in the cabin, where she made him sit down by her side.

"Your yacht voyage, of course, must be given up now," she said.

"I suppose so," he replied, resolutely keeping back the sobs that struggled in his breast.

"And what will you do now?" she asked.

"Don't know," said Arthur, miserably.

"I'm afraid your mother did not know of your plans when you left home. Did she?"

Arthur looked down in guilty silence.

"Perhaps you ran away."

Getting no answer from him, she went on, —

"I am going to say something kind and candid to you, and I hope you will not be offended. I don't like that boy you are with."

"He's a good fellow," murmured Arthur.

"I think he has led you away. You have left your home — a good home probably — and a good father and mother, if I may judge of them by their son. You have had much better breeding than your companion has had."

"I don't know about that," said Arthur, who did know in his heart all the while.

"*You* I like," she continued. "I felt an interest in you the moment I first saw you. Now hear what I have to say. Go back to your parents, my dear boy! For your mother's sake, go back at once!"

"*He* wouldn't agree to that," said Arthur.

"Then go without him. Separate yourself from him the first thing." She added, after a pause, during which he remained gloomily silent, —

"I've a proposition to make. If you are ashamed to return immediately, go home with my uncle and me, and stay with us until you can make up your mind what to do. Meanwhile, I will write to your mother, to relieve her of her anxiety, and make sure of her forgiveness and welcome when you go back to her."

Arthur drew a long breath. This was kind advice, and surely as wise as it was kind.

"We have a pleasant home; we shall reach it to-morrow," she went on, persuasively. "You have no money. What better can you do?"

"*He* has money," said Arthur.

"What if he has? How long do you suppose it will last, if you go on as you have begun?"

"We shan't let a swindler get the start of us again!"

"Maybe not. But even if you had plenty of money, I still think you had better accept my offer. Don't you think so too?"

"I'll talk with *him* about it," Arthur said, after an embarrassing pause.

"I am willing you should talk with him," his new friend replied. "But understand, I don't make the same offer to *him*."

"Then if I go with you, I must go without him?"

"Most certainly!"

"I'll think about it," said Arthur. And with a troubled heart he went to find Stub.

Stub met him with a look of surly triumph. "He made it all right with the captain," he whispered. "Told him neither of us had any money. Of course, *I* didn't contradict that. So we get our ride for nothing."



"I don't see much satisfaction in that," said the sorry Arthur.

"Don't you?" said Stub. "What if it *was* a lie about the yacht? Something will happen. We'll have a good time! We'll be Jolly Rovers yet, spite of everything."

"You haven't lost your money, as I have," Arthur answered.

"No; I wasn't such a fool!" Stub chuckled. "I more than half saw through the rascal. Didn't you notice I wouldn't let him handle my money?"

"But you let me give him mine!"

"Well, if you was a mind to, I had nothing to say. It was none of my business."

"It *was* your business!" Arthur exclaimed, bitterly. "You *ought* to have had something to say! And what *did* you say? '*He'll give you your money back; he's a tip-top fellow!*' that's what you said. Now talk of your having seen through him all the while!"

Stub winced at these home-thrusts.

"I didn't say just that; I said we *might* have seen through him. We might have known he never meant to change his twenty-dollar bill, even if he had one. Then," added Stub, "his asking one of us to go to the captain's office, in the crowd

he described, was a part of his put-up job ; just to throw dust in our eyes and make us willing he should go."

"And you told me to give him a dollar for you. And I did give it. And you owe me the dollar."

"Of course I owe you the dollar. Ain't all I've got as much yours as mine, while it lasts? Come, don't go to being blue!" said Stub. "We're having a steamboat ride. This is the kind of adventures! The smartest fellers have some *downs* with their *ups*. But they always come out right, and so shall we. What did that woman say to you?"

"She has invited me to go home with her."

"You don't say so! To stop?"

"Yes, as long as I like."

"Well, that's luck! Let's accept!" cried Stub. "Don't you see! Something is happening right along. We'll be in clover for a little while; then, if we get sick on't, we can put out again."

"But *you* are not invited," Arthur was obliged to explain.

"What! She don't want *me*?" cried Stub, indignantly.

"That's what she said," Arthur reluctantly admitted.

"Well, I'm glad on't," said Stub, after a moment's angry reflection. "I wouldn't go if she did want me. You'd be a goose to accept such an invitation as that. And of course you can't leave me in the lurch ; you ain't no such kind of chap as that, Artie."

"No ; I don't see how I can leave you, if you want me to stay with you," said Arthur, oppressed by some half-formed notions of fidelity and honor. "But I think we'd better both turn about and go home."

"I should smile ! What a chicken you are !" jeered Stub. "Did *Little Miffet* run back to warm his hands in his mother's apron after he was wrecked and had been all night on a plank in Long Island Sound ? How would *Red Ned*, the *Boy-Hunter of the Great Lakes*, how would he ever have come into his fortune if he had put back home at sight of the first streak of bad luck ? Come, we'll talk this thing over !"

The steamer was by this time pitching in the heavy Atlantic seas. The city was long since lost to sight, and even the intervening shores were growing dim. Evening was coming on ; but instead of moonlight, there was promise of a night of chill winds and fog.

"Where shall we sleep?" said Arthur, feeling weary and forlorn.

"I'll show you ; I've found a place," replied his companion. "Just the hole *Sol Slasher* or *Sague-nay Sam* would have liked. Come on !"

## CHAPTER X.

## HOW ARTHUR LEFT THE STEAMBOAT.

STUB took his companion to a pile of freight consisting largely of cheap boarding-house or hotel furniture, with mattresses at the top. Between these and the deck above there was just room for a good-sized boy to crawl in and make himself uncomfortable. They looked about the steamboat a little longer; but they were soon glad to creep in on the mattresses with their travelling-bags, and stretch themselves out in the very narrow quarters they found there.

They talked for some time, and then for a long while Arthur lay thinking of his forsaken friends, the rogue who had got his money and the good woman who had invited him to her home.

That seemed a heaven-appointed way out of his present trouble, and why should he not accept it? He knew very well that Stub's influence over him was bad. So his sister had told him many times, and now he was proving her words true. And yet

he could not make up his mind to follow the kind lady's advice and abandon that bad friend.

Excited and anxious as he was, he fell asleep thinking of these things. But more than once he awoke in the night, troubled by strange sounds that found their way into his dreams.

The steamer pitched, the engine clanked steadily, the paddles rushed; and at length the great steam-whistle began to sound dolefully. Now and then the engineer's bell would tinkle; perhaps the clanking would cease, and only the heaving of the ship would indicate that they were still at sea.

Stub, too, was awake at last. "It's the fog," he said to Arthur. "The whistle is blowing, and we are running slow and stopping."

He turned on the mattress and slept again. Arthur also fell asleep, although the doleful sounds of the steam signals continued throughout the night.

Then came all at once a more terrible sound. A mighty and horrible crashing, mingled with human screams; a shock which seemed tearing the steam-boat asunder and bearing her over on her side.

The boys awoke to find themselves tumbling with the mattresses from the pile of freight. Bedsprings and washstands tumbled with them; and all was chaos.

The steamer righted. There was another sound of crashing and tearing away. Wild shouts were heard; and then came the direful roar of escaping steam.

"Where are we? What has happened?" cried Arthur, in the utmost bewilderment of fear.

Somebody was scrambling before him over the jostled freight. It was Stub, uttering half-inarticulate words of terror.

"The steamer is cut in two!" shrieked a wild voice just beyond. "We are sinking!"

The boys were not alone in their fright. Strange scenes met their eyes in the gray light of the early morning. Passengers were darting out of the cabins, some half-dressed, men with their pantaloons in their hands, and women in their night-clothes; some putting on life-preservers, and others asking frantically for life-preservers and boats.

A few who retained their self-possession were trying to quiet the rest. It took the united strength of two men to keep one terrified woman from leaping overboard; another had fallen prone upon the deck in a swoon.

The boys ran to the side of the steamer just in time to see a huge ghostly object moving slowly away in the dense fog.

"That's the brig that run into us!" some one cried. "She's sinking, too!"

"Where can we find life-preservers? Where are the life-preservers?" Stub yelled, at the top of his voice.

Nobody answered. The boys saw one man tremblingly holding on to three life-preservers, without the power to put one on.

"I'll help you!" cried Stub.

But, instead of rendering help, he snatched one of the life-preservers and began to put it around his own stocky little body, shrieking, "How does this go? How does the plaguy thing go?"

Arthur saw a pale, anxious, but composed face amidst the throng. It was that of his lady friend of the evening before. She was standing by her uncle, who appeared to be vainly endeavoring to calm the fears of those around him, and to learn what actual damage had been done to the steamer.

Seeing that they had life-preservers in their hands, Arthur rushed up to them and asked if they could tell him where to find one.

"You can have this," said the niece, and handed him her own.

Arthur took it! Then suddenly reflecting, per-



haps, that he—the boy who had aspired to perform some heroic act of rescue—was actually depriving a woman of her own means of safety, he held it out towards her with a shaking hand, saying, “But then you will have none!”

“I shall be taken care of; there is plenty of time yet,” she replied. “My uncle says the steamer can’t possibly sink for half an hour, if it sinks at all.”

She made him keep the life-preserver; and deriving courage from the calmness she displayed, he went back to tell Stub that there was no immediate danger.

“Don’t tell me!” Stub exclaimed. “Everybody says we are going down.”

“Our bags—we might save them,” said Arthur.

“Who cares for the bags? We shall be lucky if we save ourselves,” cried Stub. “Put on your life-preserver!”

He had already got his on. It was the ordinary clumsy apparatus, made of stout strips of cork covered and bound together with canvas, forming a belt or jacket as broad as the pieces of cork were long.

With his bristling bare head, his wild looks and his stump of a body enclosed in this portable slat-

fence, Stub would have been a laughable object, if any object could be laughable at such a time.

"But our hats ! We haven't got our hats !" said Arthur.

The way Stub put up his hand to his rough pate and glanced at his companion showed that he had not the faintest notion, up to that time, whether they had their hats or not. The boys might also have been running about the wet decks without their shoes, like some of the other passengers, if they had not slept in them.

"I put my hat with my bag," said Stub.

Arthur had done the same ; hats and bags had been placed on the pile of mattresses they slept on, and had probably been tumbled down with them in the passage, when the steamer received its shock.

"I'm going to look for mine, anyway !" said Arthur.

"Put on your life-preserver first, I tell ye !" cried Stub, "so's to be ready any minute ! Then I'll go with ye."

Arthur complied, Stub assisting him to tie the strings. - Closely as these could be drawn, however, the cork-jacket, which had been designed to fit a much larger person, hung so loosely on the

boy's slim body, that he had to hold fast to it as he moved about to keep it from dropping to his heels.

"Now we'll go for our hats and things — and be quick!" said Stub. "For if the steamer goes down while we're in that hole life-preservers won't save us."

In their search among the mattresses, Arthur fell once more under the influence of his companion's terrors.

"If we stay a second too long, we are gone!" said Stub. "Can't you feel the boat giving her last lurch now?"

Arthur believed he could; the disorder of the tumbled mattresses, the gloomy solitude of the place, the rolling of the vessel and the dismal bellings of distress from the steam-whistle, all helping his excited imagination.

But they had succeeded in finding their property without much trouble; though it seemed a vast



deal of trouble to the frightened boys. Then, believing a moment's delay might prove fatal,—expecting even to see the engulfing waves sweep over and through the wreck before they could get out,—out they scrambled.

When Arthur re-emerged with his hat on his head, clutching his bag with one hand and holding his cork belt with the other, he saw something which did not tend to allay his excitement.

“They’re lowering a boat!” he said to Stub, who came after him.

“That shows!” said Stub. They wouldn’t be lowering boats if we wasn’t sinking! Come on!”

He rushed to the quarter where the boat could be seen swinging from the davits above, against a background of dense fog. It was evident that unaccustomed hands were trying to lower it. It descended by hitches, one end at a time. The sight filled a few of the passengers with frenzied eagerness to throw themselves into it the moment it should reach the water.

Stub would not wait even for that. “Now’s our chance. Come, I tell ye!” he called to Arthur, and jumped for the boat while it was yet hanging in the air.

Arthur, quite beside himself, thinking at the instant that he must obey his comrade's example and command, leaped after him. Two men jumped at the same time. They four were the first in the boat, and likewise the last.

"Lower away! lower away!" screamed Stub, while a voice above roared, —

"Out of there, every one of you!"

Arthur looked to see what the rest did. Not one stirred to obey. The fog curled about them and seemed ready to swallow boat and passengers, as they swung there over the swashing waves.

There was a hitch in the pulleys; then all at once the stern end of the boat dropped down. The thwart where Arthur sat seemed suddenly jerked from under him, and he was hurled headlong into the sea. Stub and the other two still clung. But in a few seconds they found themselves hardly better off than if they had followed Arthur overboard.

The boat, lowered in this bungling way, immediately filled; and the half-drenched inmates, to save themselves, scrambled up towards the bow, which was still partially suspended. Then, with every wave, aided with every roll of the steamer, the boat went churning up and down in a manner that threatened momentarily to wash them off.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE MAN IN THE DORY.

OF poor Arthur, meanwhile, not much else could be seen besides his life-preserver. This, as I have said, was much too big for his body. When he jumped into the boat, it slipped down to his hips; and, when he was thrown into the water, it got entangled about his legs.

He was a pretty good swimmer in favorable circumstances. But with his heels buoyed up, his head had a frightful tendency to go down. He could drown if he could not sink.

He tried first to lay hold of the swaying boat, but was carried rapidly away from it on a falling wave. Then he struggled with the terrible encumbrance about his legs.

Paddling desperately with one hand to support his head above water, he endeavored with the other to draw the cork-jacket upwards about his body. Failing in this, and feeling himself actually drown-

ing, he began to push it in the other direction, and after some frantic struggling managed to kick himself free.

Having got rid of his life-preserver, which was fast becoming a life-destroyer, he had a chance.

When his face finally emerged from the waves, and he was able to see at all through the salt water that choked and blinded him, he found that he was several yards from the steamer, whose great bulk rose before him dimly in the fog. He had a glimpse of her crushed paddle-box and gashed side, her overturned smoke-stack dangling in its iron stays, and the half-clad, terrified groups on her decks.



The two men who clung to the boat were climbing up on the steamer; and Stub had caught a leg of one, who was trying to kick him off.

Stub held on as if for life. The leg kicked with equal zeal. How long this had been going on Arthur could not tell, when all at once the companion leg fetched Stub a rude buffet on the pate, and he fell backwards into the water.

He was that instant hidden from Arthur's view by a dark object that cut the fog between them. It was a boat that had suddenly appeared gliding out of the all-enveloping cloud. It grazed Arthur's shoulder, and a long arm reaching out of it caught him by the coat.

"Ketch hold here! tumble in!" cried a voice behind the arm. "A leetle further towards the stern or you'll tip the dory."

Arthur, still strangling from the effects of too much salt water, clutched the rail, and let his hands run along on it until near the stern, when he was quickly helped aboard.

Stub had already struck out for the dory. He caught hold of the other side, and unwittingly helped to balance it while Arthur climbed over. He was then taken in at the bow, as Arthur had been at the stern.



Both boys had let go their bags, and Arthur had lost his hat as well as his cork-jacket. Dismal-looking objects they were, crouching in the ends of the tossing dory, enveloped in mist, their clothing drenched, and the water dripping from their heads.

"What's the matter with the steamer?" said the man who had fished them out, resuming his oars, and staring up at the demolished paddle-wheel.

"Your brig run into us ; don't you know?" said Stub.

"My brig? I hain't got no brig!" said the man.

"Ain't this the brig's boat?"

"Not much! This is my fishin'-dory. That must be the brig a-ringin' her fog-bell off here."

"How did *you* get here?" Stub asked.

"I was underrunnin' my trawl when I heard the distress-signals blowed. I couldn't see nary thing but the fog ; but I rowed in the direction of the sounds. I'd just took in my last fish."

The boys now noticed a couple of tubs in the boat, one containing coiled lines with large hooks attached, the other partly filled with good-sized cod and hake.

Soon Arthur made a still more interesting discovery. He saw his hat, foundered, tossing in the

sea, near the lost life-preserver. These he fished out by means of a short boat-hook, saying as he lifted the dripping cork-jacket over the dory's side, —

"That came pretty near being the death of me. I've found out one thing; the place of a life-preserver isn't about a fellow's heels."

He was getting over his fright, but he was still in a state of high nervous excitement. He was fast recovering, too, from his too intimate acquaintance with salt water; he had ceased strangling and coughing, and he did not much mind his wet clothes.

Afterwards the two handbags were found floating about, and hauled in by the boat-hook, considerably the heavier for their brief soaking.

The swamped boat was hoisted by the davits. In the meantime a second boat had been lowered, quietly, and in good order, from the other side of the steamer; and it now appeared, running up under the smashed paddle-box, which a cool-headed officer standing in the bow proceeded to examine.

While he was making his observations and reporting to an officer on deck, still another boat came out of the fog, from the direction in which the invisible brig was lying to.

Some earnest words passed between the officers of the two boats in regard to the collision. Fortunately, whether the steamer or the brig were most to blame for it, no fatal injury to either had been done. Both had been running at a low rate of speed when it had occurred, and the paddle-box had broken the force of the blow; although the great weight of the brig had carried her well into the steamer's actual side, crushing the upper timbers of both.

Officers were now seen moving about the deck, tranquillizing the passengers; assuring them that the steamer was safe, and would be able to proceed on her voyage as soon as the smoke-stack could be righted and the wreck of the paddle-wheel cleared away.

This good news reached the two boys in the dory, as it ran up alongside the steamer's boat.

"Ye want to go back on board?" said the fisherman, resting on his oars.

"I don't know what we should want to do that for!" said Stub. "I've had enough of the old steamboat! hain't you, Artie?"

Arthur thought of the kind young woman who had invited him to go home with her, and had given him the life-belt. He would have liked at

least to see her again and thank her. Yet, wet as he was, he could not say that he cared to return on board the steamer.

"Can you take us ashore?" he asked the fisherman; "to some house where we can get dry and warm?"

"So I say!" Stub exclaimed. "I'm wet as a drowned rat!"

"I can take ye into our crick, to my shanty, and give ye a warmin' outside and a cup o' coffee in, if ye can't do no better," said the fisherman.

"That's good enough, I should say, shouldn't you, Artie?" cried Stub. "We're in luck, after all!"

"Mighty poor luck you'll call it, I'm afraid!" said the fisherman. "But you'll be welcome to such comforts as I've got. Le' me see first what that man wants."

Somebody was calling to him from on board the steamer.

"It's *L. T.*!" said Stub, with a grim laugh. "The real one; the owner of that famous trunk! He wants you, Artie."

Arthur's heart gave a big jump. The opportunity held out to him by the niece was not then quite thrown away. He could still accept her

offer ; and how could he know but it might prove his salvation ? — if Stub would only let him off !

But Uncle Luther Talcott did not speak directly to Arthur, as the dory drew near. His business was with the fisherman. "How far are we from shore ?" he asked.

"About three miles."

"What point do you hail from ?"

"Crab Crick, close by Long Cliff ; I fish for the hotel."

"I thought we must be in that neighborhood," said the uncle. "No doubt we might get a conveyance there."

Being satisfied on that point, he added, —

"The steamer may be delayed here an hour or two ; and there's no knowing when we shall get into port. If you could take me ashore, with my niece, I should like it."

Again Arthur's heart thrilled with hope. The fisherman tossed up the life-preservers, as he replied, —

"I'd willingly take you, but I'm afraid my dory ain't exactly fit for a lady's accommodation."

"I declare !" said the old gentleman, looking down into the miserable, dirty, fishy, leaky skiff, which now lay close alongside. "I'm afraid my-

self it isn't just the thing. I'm obliged to you, my friend; but I think we'll stay where we are, unless the captain concludes to send us ashore in one of his boats."

Arthur's heart sank again. The old gentleman seemed now to notice him for the first time. "Are you going ashore, boys?" he asked.

"I suppose so," said Arthur.

"If we can git there without another shipwreck!" added Stub, with a brave air, feeling that he now had an adventure to talk about and brag of. "We're going to try for't!"

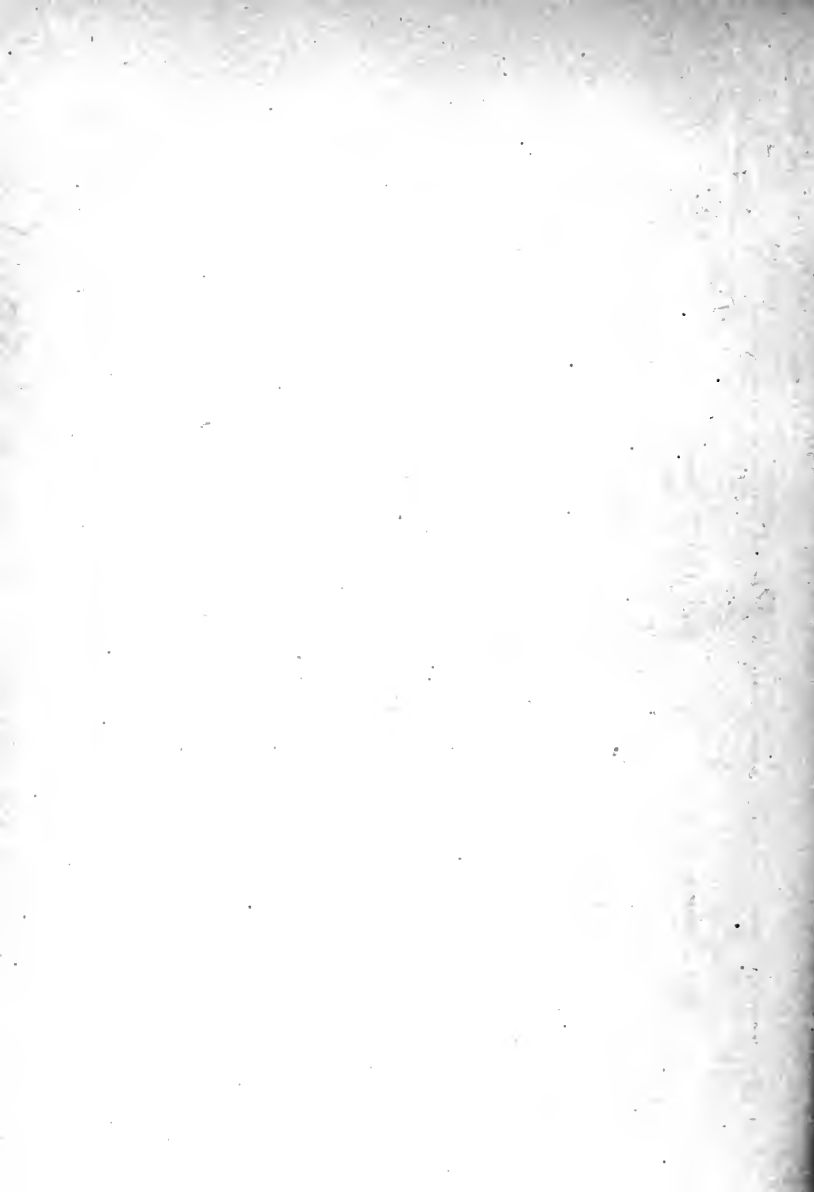
"Well, take care of yourselves, boys!" said the old gentleman, as the dory pulled away.

Just then the niece came to the uncle's side. He spoke to her, pointing at the receding skiff. There she saw the boy she would so gladly have befriended, lifting his wet hat to her in the tossing stern. She waved her handkerchief after him with a most tender, sadly foreboding smile.

Filled with disappointment and misgivings, Arthur looked back, still lifting his hat, in the departing dory, until the white handkerchief and the pale face, with the steamer's vast shadowy shape, faded from sight and vanished in the fog.



SHE WAVED HER HANDKERCHIEF AFTER HIM. Page 98





## CHAPTER XII.

## GOING ASHORE.

HOW do you know the way?" Stub asked the fisherman, who rowed as confidently into the mist as if familiar landmarks had been visible all around.

"Can't tell how. But I know it. I'm p'intin' straight as a spar for Crab Crick."

The fisherman rested on his oars a moment and looked at the running waves.

"I couldn't git turned about very well," he said, "as long as I know which way the wind blows, what there is of it, and more partic'larly which way the waves run, for they don't change direction so sudden as the wind shifts around sometimes."

"How could you find your trawl in such a fog?" Stub wished to know.

"By the floats."

"But how could you find the floats?"

"I know the spot so well I can row straight to

it in the thickest kind of a fog," the fisherman explained.

"You was out early!" said Stub.

"Haf to be, in my business. My pardner's off sick jest now, and I have double work to do."

"Fishing for a living must be fun!" said Stub. "Ain't it?"

"It's fun, like any other business you're interested in and git a livin' by," replied the fisherman. "But there's work in it; hard work, and rough work, too, and work early and late. Some folks like it and some don't."

"I think I should like it; wouldn't you, Artie?" said Stub.

"Maybe," said Artie, recovering his spirits somewhat. "You've got some big fish here!"

"I don't call them very big," said the fisherman. "Jest an average run."

"What do you do with 'em?" Stub inquired.

"Sell 'em. I supply the hotel, and generly have enough for a few families besides. When I've more'n I can dispose of fresh, I salt 'em down."

"Don't ye want to hire a hand or two, while your partner is sick?"

As he put this question, Stub winked knowingly at Arthur over the fisherman's broad back.

"I should like a little help that would *be* help. I don't know about green boys."

"You wouldn't find us so very green; would he, Artie?" said Stub. "I guess there ain't much about the fishing business that we couldn't learn, short notice!"

"No doubt ye could learn," said the fisherman. "But could you stand it? Have ye got the pluck?"

"The pluck?" echoed Stub, with his resolute head-shake. "I should smile! You'd ought to've seen us aboard that steamer. Hadn't he, Artie?"

As Artie could not flatter himself that they had gathered laurels from that adventure, he humbly replied: —

"I don't know!"

"You never did see such a pack of frightened fools as we was in!" Stub rattled on. "Men and women fairly crazy with fear!"

"I s'pose you wasn't scared nary bit," said the fisherman, dryly.

"When everybody told us the steamer was cut in two, and we was going straight to the bottom of the Atlantic ocean, — of course," said Stub, "we thought if we was to do anything, we must do it in a hurry. So we looked out for ourselves."

"You don't seem to have looked out for yourselves very well," observed the fisherman.

"That ain't our fault. I should like to get hold of the feller that spilt us out of that boat. He done it a-purpose, I know!"

"No, he didn't," said Arthur. "The men lowering the boat didn't know what they were about."

"Likely," said the fisherman. "Even if they was steamboat hands, like as not they never lowered a boat afore. Then the tackle may have been out of order. That's often the way on't. Folks make pervisions agin' accidents; but if the accidents are long a-comin', they git to think they won't come at all, and neglect the pervisions."

"What's that roar we hear?" asked Arthur. "Breakers?"

"Breakers on the bar, by the mouth of Crab Crick. I've been a-hearin' on 'em, and a-steerin' by 'em, for the last five minutes. I can tell them breakers, by the sound, from them on the beach beyond, or from the surf in Longcliff Cove, fur as I hear 'em."

"We're running right into 'em, ain't we?" cried Stub, as the dory was heaved by a tremendous swell.

"Don't you fear," replied the fisherman, pulling

steadily at his oars. "Set still right where you be, and you'll be all right. These swells begin to rise on the bar a quarter of a mile 'fore they break. Then, when they do break, a dory like this has got to be well out of 'em, one side or t'other."

Another mighty swell heaved the boat, and let it sink swiftly again in a hollow of the sea. The roar just ahead became fearful. Still the fog shut out every object from sight, except a little space of the infinite tumbling ocean surrounding the dory. The mist seemed scarcely to open before them when it closed up behind, as the boat sped on over the wild backs of the slippery waves.

To Arthur's eyes, and still more to his excited imagination, there was something truly awful in what he saw and felt and heard. How terrible was the power of the vast deep! How blind, how helpless, how utterly dependent on an oar was he, tossing there upon the billows!

"I don't gener'ly cross much of these swells; they're treacherous critters!" said the fisherman. "Give 'em a chance to take the dory lengthways, and they'd jest as lives whop her over as not; they ain't the least mite pa'tic'lar!"

Just then the summit of a chasing wave began to pile itself up in a ridge of wild water,

sweeping swiftly after, and towering above the skiff.

"Oh! that will ketch us!" cried Stub, in alarm.

Arthur, too, looked back; and it seemed to him that they certainly must be overwhelmed. The ridge grew narrower and higher, shooting up in a crest that seemed loth to burst. Then the top began slowly to project itself and curve shorewards, a magnificent forward-sweeping scroll, which enlarged and crumbled and broke, and finally convulsed the whole vast billow in a chaos of snow-white foam, subsiding and vanishing in the fog.

Where all this time was the dory? It had been moving diagonally across the swells, until the watchful oarsman saw this hugest one of all approach. With a quick but steady movement of the sculls, he turned the skiff at right angles to the advancing crest. The effect was magical. The stern rose first, then the entire dory was caught up gently and cradled on the wave, at the very moment when it burst into foam.

"That's the way to do it!" cried Stub, triumphantly. "That's the way."

"Yes," said the fisherman, "that's the way, when you know how. But it's about time to git out of this. I shouldn't have got into it if I hadn't

gone south of my reg'lar course to find the steamer."

Between that wave and the next he made good progress to the right, and soon got the dory well off the bar.

The boys could now see the breakers spreading out in a wide belt of foam on their left; while on their right a granite breakwater loomed through the mist. The open channel lay between; pursuing which, the dory was soon afloat in the smooth, swift water of Crab Creek.

The fog, which had been thinning for some minutes, now lifted enough to let a shaft of faint sunlight strike across the sea.

It was a welcome sight to Arthur, who looked eagerly around. On the left of the dory's course, beyond the rising sandbar, was a mile of roaring breakers. High on the right, above the river-bank, was the Longcliff Hotel, with broad piazzas fronting the sea, against a background of gilded mist. Behind the skiff lay the shining ocean-levels, just glimpsed beneath ragged fringes of illumined vapor.

The tide was running in rapidly, a clear, powerful stream, spreading into coves and havens, and winding out of sight between green banks. The dory was borne forward by it with great velocity.

"Ain't this glorious!" exclaimed Stub. "Wish now I had my canoe! Must be fun to row on such a tide!"

"Depends on whuther you and the tide's goin' the same way," said the fisherman. "If you're comin' in agin' it, with a heavy load of fish, 'tain't no child's play. Tide's like some folks," he added, philosophically; "mighty 'commodatin' if ye humor 'em, and let 'em have their will in everything; but rough customers if they're opposed."

He pulled his dory out of the current into a broad cove opening on the Longcliff side, and ran up to the slimy legs of an old wharf.

"Here's where I haul up," he said, dropping his oars and catching the rung of a wharf-ladder with a boat-hook. "Pass me the end of that painter."

Taking the rope which Stub handed him, he climbed the ladder, which was about half submerged by the tide, and made the dory fast to the wharf above. He then took the boys' bags, which they passed up to him, and helped them to mount.

"Now," said he, "what to do with ye is the question."

He looked at our *Jolly Rovers*, who in turn looked at him, and their not very jolly surroundings.



The fog was shutting down again; and they stood there in the gathering vapor, wet and blue and cold. Arthur was trembling from head to foot. The hotel had vanished in the cloud, and not a house was in sight.

"The place for you to be comf'table," said the fisherman, "is the hotel, if you've got money. Or you can go up to some of the village boardin'-houses, about a mile. Walkin' will warm ye."

"We ain't over and above flush with money," said Stub.

To which Arthur, shiveringly, added,

"I'd rather get warm first, and walk afterwards."

"Then," said the fisherman, "I don't see but what I shall haf to take care of ye."

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE FISHERMAN'S HUT.

WHERE do you live?" Stub inquired, with a look of much concern.

"Here," said the fisherman.

Still the boys couldn't see where. There were two buildings close upon the wharf; one, a large, weather-blackened and dilapidated shell; the other, a rude box covered with rough new boards.

"This is my shebang;" and the fisherman moved towards the box, which the boys now noticed had one small window and a door. They exchanged looks of doubt and despondency, which did not brighten when he pulled a latch-string out of a hole with a bent wire, threw open the door, and exposed the gloomy interior.

There was a small cooking-stove in the centre of the room. On one side were framed two rough bunks, one above the other. Two or three old coats and hats, a skillet and a skimmer, hung on nails in the wall. There were also a shelf with

some scanty crockery on it, two barrels with a board across them, and a pair of stools.

There was no fire in the stove, and the shebang, as the fisherman called it, appeared exceedingly dismal and comfortless.

"Can't we find better quarters in that old barn?" said Stub, with a sarcastic grin at the larger building.

"That ain't no barn," was the reply. "That's a fish-house; ruther played out now, but thousands of tons of codfish has been pickled there in its day. If ye don't like what I've got to offer, ye're welcome to look elsewhere."

"I should smile!" said Stub.

"Oh, we like it!" Arthur hastened to say, not caring just then to look further.

"I'm goin' to have a fire and breakfast, whuther ye stay or not," said the master of the house.

He struck a match, and touched with it a wad of paper sticking out of the stove door. The flame was quickly communicated to kindlings placed ready within; and after a few puffs of smoke that filled the room, the little old stove began to roar in a way that promised comfort to drenched and shivering guests.

"Many a shipwrecked chap has been glad of a wus refuge than this," he said.

"We're glad of it!" exclaimed Arthur. "You're ever so kind!"

"I'd no idee you could fire up so quick," said Stub. "The griddles are warm already."

"It ain't a palace," said the proprietor; "and it wouldn't answer our purpose if it was. My pardner and me jest slung these boards together for a temp'rary shelter while we're at our summer's job."

Then leaving the boys to enjoy it, he went down the ladder to his dory, and began to throw the fish out of the tub, one by one, up on the wharf.

"This ain't so bad!" said Stub, feeling the warmth of the fire. "I'm beginning to steam! What makes you so glum?"

Arthur could not help thinking of his own home, the picture of which in his mind was so cheerful, compared with this miserable hut. But he merely replied, —

"Oh, nothing!"

They hung their coats and hats on nails in the boards, and then, sitting down on the stools, pulled off, not without difficulty, their soaked shoes and stockings.

Afterwards they opened their bags and removed the half-soaked contents, looking for something dry enough to put on.

"Look a' that!" cried Stub, taking out copies of *The Boys' Own*. "There's a *Wild Young Waterman* for ye! *Left-Handed Luke* is coming all to pieces; and *Saguenay Sam* has had his last ducking."

He spread the wet papers on the bunks to dry, and then stood turning himself before the stove.

"What would *they* have done, do ye suppose?" said Arthur.

"Who? when? where?" said Stub.

"*They*." Arthur pointed at their favorite heroes drying on the bunks. "In our place. This morning."

"*Sol Slasher*, *Wild Will*, and them fellers?" said Stub. "I don't see what they could have done. We had just no chance at all."

"*They* always found chances, or made 'em," said Arthur. "But just look at *our* luck. The clam-diggers out-generalled you, and smashed your canoe, the first thing."

"That's because you didn't pitch in and help," retorted Stub.

"*Left-Handed Luke* never wanted help, no matter how many were against him," said Arthur.

He was evidently beginning to lose faith in his

companion, or in the luck they had counted upon in setting off on their heroic adventures.

"Then that sharper, Lewis Thomas, — which wasn't his name, any more than it's yours or mine, — he got into us," said Arthur.

"He didn't get into *me*!" replied Stub, stoutly.

"He got into you just as much as he did into me," Arthur insisted, indignant at this cowardly shirking of responsibility. "But you held on to your money, and made me hand out mine. That was mean enough, without your taking the trouble now to deny your share in the business, and lay all the blame on to me. Not one of them," — Arthur indicated the paper heroes drying on the bunks, — "not even *Little Whiffet*, the only mean one amongst 'em — would have done so mean a thing as that."

"Why! what's the matter with ye?" cried Stub, affecting to laugh at this plain talk.

But he was manifestly nettled by it, and he colored very red as he turned himself before the fire.

"Then in the steamboat this morning," Arthur went on, "you were just as scared as I was; we were both scared nigh-about to death, or we never could have cut up so like a couple of confounded

idiots, and get tipped into the sea. Talk about our being in a crowd of fools! Now, honest, Stub! did you see any bigger fools than we were?"

Arthur, we see, was getting rid of some illusions.

Stub colored still more violently, possibly from the effect of the heat, rubbed his rough pate with both hands, slapped his thighs, hitched up his trousers, turned himself about like a show-figure in a shop window, and chuckled foolishly.

"Don't say nothing about that, Artie," he replied, after an interval of ludicrous embarrassment. "Our luck is coming. It's beginning now. Why, jest look at it! A shipwreck to blow about—rescued by a fisherman—and now here we be! This is a good fire. This is a good shebang! We shall have some breakfast bimeby, and I shall be hungry enough to think it's awful good, whatever it is. Here's a good place to tie up till we get tired out, and want to put out for something new."

Having by this time worked himself into a more self-complacent humor, Stub added, with his old assertive head-shake,—

"I like it! and I'm going to stay and turn fisherman."

Arthur himself could not see that there was

anything better for them to do. Having lost his money, and thrown away the one chance of salvation held out to him by his Good Angel on the steamboat (for such she seemed to him now), he felt that he must follow his bad companion, keep on good terms with him, and share his fortunes.

He did not know that his Good Angel was even then landing with a boat-load of passengers in Longcliff Cove, and that she would be breakfasting comfortably at the hotel so near to him, whilst he, in his steaming clothes, was sipping the fisherman's bad coffee and eating his fried fish and baked potatoes at the end of a board placed on two barrels for a table.

Nor was he in the least aware of Stub's secret thoughts regarding him; thoughts which would hardly have done credit to the *Wild Young Waterman*, or the *Boy Ranger of the Brazos*.

"Blamed fool not to take up with that woman's offer! I would if I had been in his place. And I almost wish he had!"

For by industriously scratching that short-cropped head of his, Stub had got at this reflection: "He's out of money and will expect to share mine. I hain't got enough for two, and I ain't going to pay *his* bills, nohow!"



He would not for a moment consider the fact that he was responsible for at least a part of Arthur's loss. And when his conscience — for even Stub had some little conscience — accused him of base treachery to this boy whom he had led so far toward his ruin, he fell back upon a sense of resentment.

"The idee of his talking to me the way he did this morning! That's enough! I'll let him know! What can he expect of me after that?"

These considerations did not come to him all at once, but were gradually developed in his mind as the two boys looked about the place during the day, and observed the fisherman's way of life. That, it must be owned, did not suit very well Arthur's romantic ideas nor Stub's notion of living without labor.

"There may be fun fishing," he said to himself; "but when it comes to work, I'll do something besides cleaning and handling great slippery cod and haddock. He won't catch me cooking his meals and washing his old dishes for him, neither!"

Stub was careful, however, not to say anything like this to Arthur. In fact, his conclusion was reached and his final determination formed when Arthur, that afternoon, worn out with excitement

and want of sleep, had rolled into one of the bunks and spread a handkerchief over his face as a protection against the flies.

Stub had talked of turning into the other bunk, but said he would pick up his things first, some of which were lying or hanging about the hut. These he packed into his bag, with the exception of a few of the most ragged copies of *The Boys' Own*.

"He may get what comfort he can out of them," he said to himself, as he laid *Sol Slasher* and *Left-Handed Luke* in the same bunk with Arthur.

The rustling did not disturb the over-wearied boy. He was breathing heavily, his face shielded from sight and the attacks of flies, his soul escaped from its outward troubles, his mind wandering far away in dreams.

Stub watched him awhile, then quietly filled his pockets with hard-tack from one of the barrels, and slipped softly out of the hut, with his travelling-bag under his arm.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## STUB'S TREACHERY.

ARTHUR dreamed that he had fallen from Stub's canoe into the water; and that a monster of the deep caught his leg, and was pulling him down, when a woman reached out her hand to him from the shore.

The woman was his Good Angel of the steamboat; and the shore was his father's garden. He had just got one knee on the strawberry-bed, while the monster — who had a grinning face and short-cropped hair wonderfully like Stub's — still tugged at the other leg, when a strange voice cried out, — "Where's Job Buckhorn?"

As Arthur had heard the fisherman called by that name, he was quickly and rudely recalled to the old fish-wharf and fly-haunted shebang.

He started up, throwing the handkerchief from his face and bumping his head against the bunk above, and saw a young man with a basket and fishing-rod standing before the door of the hut.

"Where's Job? Or can you tell me where he keeps his clams?" this young man said to Arthur.

Arthur remembered that the fisherman was also a dealer in clam-bait, and that he had last seen him going off in his dory to dig clams at low tide.

"I don't know," he said, tumbling out of the bunk. "Maybe Stub does. Where's Stub?"

Stub was nowhere to be seen. "He and Mr. Buckhorn must have gone off together. I guess I've been asleep," said Arthur.

Indeed, he must have slept two or three hours, for the sun was sinking low over the creek, and the mud-flats, which had been bare when he saw Job Buckhorn go off to them in his dory, were now covered by the rising tide.

"There comes Job now!" said the young man with the fish-pole.

Arthur looked and saw Buckhorn coming down from the hotel alone. The young man got his clam-bait and went off to join some girls who were waiting for him above the wharf. Then Arthur said to Buckhorn,—

"Where's Stub? Have you seen him?"

"Not lately," said Job. "When I was diggin' clams I noticed him goin' towards the village."

"I suppose he has gone to get fish-hooks," said

Arthur ; " he spoke of it. But what makes him so long ? "

" I thought I noticed he was a-gittin' a little restless," replied Job. " My 'commodations didn't seem to suit him, and no wonder. I knew both of ye'd git off the notion of stoppin' here and turnin' fishermen. You seem less fitted for it than he does."

To give the young man his bait, Buckhorn had hauled up a large basket of clams from the shady end of the wharf. He now let it down again, and left it suspended by the rope. Then he went to start up a fire in the hut ; while Arthur walked about, waiting for Stub.

The weather had been fine since the fog cleared early in the day. A cool breeze was blowing from the sea. The white breakers were rolling in on the beach ; their steady roar filled the air. Arthur looked across at them, and up the creek and road ; muttering to himself from time to time, —

" Where can that fellow be ? "

Then he tried to forget his anxious thoughts, and stood on the edge of the pier gazing down through the transparent water at the ghastly fish-heads with which the bottom just there was paved. There were hundreds of them, that had been

flung over by Job and his partner when they dressed their fish on the wharf. Among them were a few clam-shells; and the whole was lighted up by the late afternoon sun shining through the clear, still flood.

Arthur could also see great snake-like eels and ugly sculpins moving about down there; and, close to the timbers of the pier, cunners and pollocks that had come in with the tide.

Then he watched the sail-boats and dories, which likewise came in with the tide. Some moved on, with the strong, swift current, towards the village; others, having landed their passengers, remained hauled up on the sandy shore of the creek, or were moored in the cove.

Then he went and watched Buckhorn getting supper,—boiling water for his black coffee and preparing to broil fresh mackerel.

Still Master Culbert's prolonged and unaccountable absence troubled Arthur. He entered the hut and looked around; and seeing the copies of *The Boys' Own* which he had tossed off when he got up in haste from his nap,—the *Wild Young Waterman* rumpled in the bunk and *Left-Handed Luke* in his rags on the floor,—he thought he would fold them up and put them into Stub's bag.

But the bag was not to be found.

"Where's his bag? have you seen Stub's bag?" he inquired of Job at the door.

Job had not touched it.

"It's gone!" Arthur exclaimed, trembling with vague fear. "His bag is gone!"

"Now I think on't," said Job, taking the warmed skillet from the stove and greasing it, "he had somethin' under his arm when I see him goin' up the road, —about the size of his grab-bag. I bet it was his grab-bag!"

Arthur sank down on the side of the bunk, looking sick.

"He can't have gi'n ye the slip, can he?" said Buckhorn, startled, putting down the skillet and looking earnestly at Arthur. "I didn't think he was such a scalliwag as that!"

Still Arthur could not speak. But he thought of many things which did not tend to revive his faith in Stub.

"Though I didn't like him very well," Job continued. "I'll tell ye why. He ain't a gentleman."

At another time it would have seemed odd to Arthur to see the roughly-clad, weather-browned fisherman, with his hairy bare arms and soiled

hands, pause in his skillet-greasing to make a comment of this sort.

Yet why not? For, notwithstanding his slouched hat, his muddy boots, and his ungrammatical speech, there was something of the "gentleman" in Job Buckhorn's plain good manners and simple kindness of heart; something which Stub had not, and would never have.

"That's why I didn't like him," Job added. "And that's what has made me think all along that you'd kind o' got into bad company."

This uneducated fisherman, then, viewed Arthur's connection with Stub precisely as his Good Angel on the steamboat did. The wretched boy was beginning to be convinced.

"I wouldn't have believed it of him!" he burst forth, with passionate tears. "I stuck to him, when I ought to have left him, because he wanted me to. Only this morning! And now he has deserted me!"

"Mebby not, mebbby not," said Buckhorn, consolingly, as he replaced his skillet on the stove.

"Yes, he has; I know! He wouldn't have taken his bag, if he hadn't meant to go for good," said Arthur. "He has all the money, and some of it is mine by right; that's partly the reason of



it. I wouldn't believe it now, if he hadn't acted so about that money, and shirked, and lied, and been so mean."

"I'm sorry for the money," said Job; "but I shouldn't break my heart over *him*!"

Arthur sobbed, like the child he was. To have been taken away from his home by that false friend, deceived, robbed, and abandoned by him in this brutal way, seemed a wrong too great to bear.

"If you've no place to go," said Buckhorn, "you can stop here for a while — till my pardner comes back, anyway — and do chores for your keep."

"I don't see how I can ever get used to it," replied Arthur, utterly homesick and desolate.

"So I'd have thought once," said Job, as he went on preparing his simple supper. "But I've often thought of what my mother used to say. She was a great knitter. '*It's a poor leg,*' she would say, '*that can't fit its own stockin*.' So with the owners of legs. He's a poor critter that can't somehow fit into his surroundin's, make a little here, and yield a little there, — grin and bear it, — and git along some fashion. That's what I've had to do all my life, and expect to do all my life to come."

Ah, if Arthur had only learned a little of this philosophy before he scornfully threw off the good, comfortable stocking of his former condition, because it was not softest silk, and thrust his naked foot into the rough world !

## CHAPTER XV.

ARTHUR AND JOB.

NOW set up and have some supper," said Job, "and you'll feel better."

With slow, clumsy, awkward movements, most unlike a woman's, he took down from the shelf his scanty crockery, and arranged it on the board supported by the barrels, which served as a table. Then he put on his broiled mackerel, with coffee, warmed-up potatoes, and a loaf he had brought down from the hotel; and placed the stools.

Arthur, always a dainty and fastidious boy at his mother's excellent table, had nevertheless taken more kindly than the ill-bred Stub, to the fisherman's rude fare. While Stub, who had really been brought up on coarse food, sniffed and squinted superciliously at Job's humble entertainment, Arthur had eaten what was placed before him with a good grace, careful not to show by look or word that he was used to better things.

He had small appetite now, however. He had

more need of comforting words. He sat on his stool at one end of the board, while Job sat at the side, with his knees between the barrels, the boy nibbling and listening, while the man ate and talked.

Buckhorn showed a fair large brow, with his hat off; and it was altogether a kindly, honest, intelligent face that beamed on Arthur.

"You won't like it at first, mebbe," he said, resuming the conversation that had been interrupted. "But you'll git used to it. It's wonderful, what things we can git used to, in this world, and not mind 'em! things that are jest like pizen to us, to begin with."

"I don't see what I can do here," said Arthur.

"There's a pile of things, my boy! You can run my errands; sell clams; and dig 'em, too; gether floodwood; split my kindlin's; make my fire. You won't be above b'ilin' my potatoes and washin' my dishes, neither. Bait my trawl-hooks; and go out to sea with me sometimes, and help me underrun 'em and take off the fish."

"I think I should like that," said Arthur.

"You must take what you like, along with what you don't like. That's life. That's what we all have to do; even millionaires and princes can't

have everything their own way. Boys don't like to believe that," Buckhorn continued. "But it's true all the same. You'll find it out. I did."

"Were you brought up to be a fisherman?" Arthur asked.

"Bless you, no!"

Job swallowed half a cup of coffee, winked contemplatively, and then looked over with a sad, dreamy smile at Arthur.

"You'd hardly think it, from the way I dress, and the way I talk, and the way I git a livin'. Few folks know or suspect it. But it's a fact. O my! O my!"

With which exclamations, Job threw up his eyes (they were of a pale, faded blue) with a strange expression; then dropped them suddenly, and picked the bones out of his mackerel in silence.

"What is a fact?" Arthur ventured to ask, after an awkward pause in the conversation.

"Didn't I tell you?" said Job. "Well, I was back again in my boyhood; for a moment, I forgot everything else. How I have knocked about, since I was of your age, Artie!"

Singularly enough, the reminiscence seemed to produce a change in his manner of speech. His eyes glistened, and his smile was full of a fine

emotion, as he went on, using a less careless idiom than was his wont.

"I was the son of a minister, and I had as good a bringing up as any boy in the country. I was fitting for college; my folks were not rich, but they meant to give me an education, and as good a start in life as any boy need to have."

"Why didn't they?" asked Arthur, interested.

"Because I was of a different way of thinking — and doing."

"What did you do?"

"I ran away."

That was a cold dash to Arthur's reviving spirits.

"Like a fool!" added Job, reaching around for the coffee-pot on the stove. "I just slipped my cable one fine morning, and put off on this great tumbling sea we call life; and there I've been tossing ever since."

He filled his cup, and replaced the coffee-pot on the iron cover with an impatient clash.

"What made you?" inquired the pale, disheartened boy.

"What makes any boy do an idiotic thing like that?" said Buckhorn.

"I don't know!" faltered poor Arthur, very truthfully.

"My father was a stern, severe man," said Job.

Arthur couldn't but reflect that his own father was not at all stern or severe.

"He required a great deal of me ; and I never stopped to consider that it was all for my own good. He drove me to my Latin and Greek ; and woe to me if I slighted my lessons !"

What a contrast, Arthur thought, with bitter self-reproach, to his own father's easy indulgence in matters which concerned his education !

"I got so that I hated the sight of a book, and made up my mind that I would go where I should never have to look into one again.

"I ran away, and shipped before the mast ; and never wrote a word to my folks, even to let 'em know I was alive, for five years. I visited a great many different countries, and tried various trades ; and finally made up my mind there was no country so good as the one I had left, and no pursuit in life that didn't have what you may call a scamy side.

"Then I went back home, to find I had a home no longer. My parents were dead ; all my relatives were dead or scattered. I've been tossing about ever since ; never could stick to anything long, any more than I could to my lessons, which I

think now would have been easy enough if I had gone at them with the least industry or good will.

"It took me a long while to learn the wisdom of my mother's old saying. I kicked off many a stocking that would have shaped itself well enough to my foot if I had worn it with a little care and patience. I had that to learn, and many things besides under the birch and ruler of that hard old schoolma'am, Experience. Now I am forty-six years old; a Jack-at-all-trades and good at none; glad enough just now to get a living at what you see me doing here."

Job Buckhorn then drew out from Arthur something of his own history. But the great folly of his life was too recent for him to tell much of it, without being overcome with remorse and chagrin.

"The best thing you can do," said Job, looking at him curiously, "is to gee about and put back home."

"I've no money," said Arthur.

"Now look here!" replied Buckhorn, shoving back his stool. "I've got to row up to the village in my dory. Come along with me; we may get track of that interesting chum of yours. If we can overhaul him, you shall have a part of your money back, or I'll make him squeal."



## CHAPTER XVI.

## UP THE CREEK.

NOTHING under the circumstances could have pleased Arthur better than that. The tide was full when they stepped into the dory from the wharf and pushed off. The breeze had died away : there was not a ruffle of wind on the flood which spread out like a lake in coves and inlets, and burned with golden fire under the sunset sky.

Pleasure-boats from the village and hotels were out, taking advantage of the cool evening and the full tide. Swifter than the swiftest, Job's dory shot away, propelled by his powerful arms.

Arthur sat in the stern, half-forgetting his troubles for the moment amidst the inspiring freshness and beauty of the scene. How clear and calm the creek ! How exquisitely fair, reflecting all the colors of the clouds, the rosy-tinted horizon and the dark green shores !

Suddenly he gave a start and an exclamation of surprise. A sail-boat that had come in from the

sea was moving slowly before, with heavily-drooping sail, and two men pushing with poles. On the stern was lettered the name which made Arthur cry out, —

“THE JOLLY ROVER!”

He had quite given up the idea that there was such a “yacht” in existence; and yet here it was, or its phantom, or its namesake, floating up the still creek, like an object in a dream.

Was it possible, then, that any part of what “Lewis Thomas” had said about the yacht, and his friends aboard, could be true?

Glancing over his shoulder to see what had attracted Arthur’s attention, Job Buckhorn nodded to one of the men poling, and spoke to him as he rowed by.

“How’s Dorr?”

“He’s gitt’n along,” said the man. “Less fever to-day.”

After a few more questions and replies, the dory passed ahead. Then Arthur asked, with a puzzled look, “You know that sail-boat?”

“Look here!” said Job, a quick thought seeming to strike him. “Tell me more about that feller — *Lewis Thomas*! Was he a ruther slight, shortish chap, with a sallow complexion?”

"And a thin, sickly-looking beard on his lip," added Arthur.

"And jest a slight lisp?" cried Job.

"Yes, I remember his lisp!" exclaimed Arthur. "His s's were a little fuzzy, just a trifle thick."

"I know him," laughed Job. "And a miser'ble little rascal he is!"

"But—does he"—stammered Arthur, "does he know—is he a friend of—the owner of *The Jolly Rover*?"

"A friend!" echoed Job. "Dorr's his own father! He has disowned him about forty or fifty times; and as often as he cuts up some fresh deviltry he disowns him again."

"I see now what put it into his head to fool us with an imaginary yacht, and where he got the name," said Arthur.

"I can tell you of lots of his rogue's tricks; he has been in jail four or five times. But we must look out for your other friend now," said Job, glancing over his shoulder, and pulling towards one of the village piers.

Landing there, they turned from the end of the wharf into a street, where Job asked the first person they met if he had seen a boy with a carpet-bag pass that way.

"A freckle-faced, snub-nosed boy, with a little old, faded, brown bag?" said the man.

"That's the very feller!" replied Job.

"That's Stub!" exclaimed Arthur.

"He was around town this afternoon," said the man. "But I saw him starting off up the road with his bag half an hour ago."

"He hasn't got much the start of us, then!" cried Arthur, with kindling excitement. "I believe I can catch him!"

Other witnesses were found, who told a good deal about Stub's sayings and doings in the village that afternoon.

He had sauntered about the wharves and boat-yards and boarded at least one coaster, where he had offered to work his passage to any port for which it might be bound. When, however, he had been asked by the captain if he thought he could reef a topsail in a gale of wind his ardor had suddenly cooled. He seemed to have concluded to keep the solid ground, and had last been seen taking the Landport road.

"Now, what do you think?" said Job, pausing for consultation with Arthur on a street corner. "I can't go with you; and do you believe it will be any use for you to track him alone?"

"He won't go far to-night," Arthur said. "I believe I'll try."

They had already found a farmer, who was just starting to drive home, about three miles, on the Landport road ; and he had agreed to give Arthur a lift.

"Well, luck to you, my boy !" said Job, warmly grasping the small soft hand in his great, hearty, honest palm. "If you do ketch him, jest stick right to him, like a puppy to a root, and make him give you your money. But don't go too fur ; that wouldn't pay. Better come back to-night, unless you're sure of him and your money. It'll be bright moonlight ; and my door'll be open."

Arthur thanked him, and rode off on his doubtful errand.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## ARTHUR IN PURSUIT.

THE farmer whipped on at a good jog, only slackening speed once in a while to make inquiries for a boy with a bag.

Stub had been seen by several persons, and he had stopped to talk with one or two. The wagon was evidently gaining on him ; and when it turned up at the farmer's gate it was found that he had passed there not more than ten or fifteen minutes before.

"He came to the door and asked for a glass of milk," said the farmer's wife. "When he had drank it, he declared it tasted so good he would like another glass. He didn't offer to pay ; and he seemed even to begrudge a *thank-you* for what he had had."

"What sort of a story did he tell of himself?" Arthur inquired.

"He said he had an uncle in Landport, and he was going to visit him."

"Just like him !" said Arthur. "He has about

as much of an uncle there as I have. Good-bye ! I am ever so much obliged."

"I'm sorry I can't drive a little further with you," said the farmer. "I haven't had my supper yet. But you are fresh on your legs, and I guess you'll ketch up with him easy enough."

Arthur was fresh, indeed, thanks to his long, restful sleep in the afternoon. He felt that no time was to be lost ; he was eager to resume the chase.

"I'll catch him !" he cried, and started off at a brisk run.

It was a lonely road. The twilight of the long summer day was deepening into night. The moon was in mid-sky, and its light lay soft and silvery on the walls and bushes by the roadside, and on the silent fields. Arthur's shadow fell before him on the sandy track, which stretched away and was lost in the gray gloom.

For a while his own faltering footsteps and quick heart-beats were the only sounds he heard. Then he approached a swamp, from which rose on the night air the shrill chorus of singing frogs. The swamp was dark with the shadows of giant trees, from the top of one of which an owl gave an almost human *hoo-hoo* as he passed.

It must be owned that Arthur was just a little afraid. He found, if he stopped to consider it, that he had not a particle of the reckless daring of *Little Whiffet*, or of the *Boy Hunter of the Great Lakes*. But his determination to overtake the traitor carried him on.

Beyond the swamp he came upon a row of boys sitting on a door-yard fence, laughing and talking in the brightening moonlight. They were having so much fun and making so much noise that they did not notice his approach; and he heard one of them say:

"I wish I had told him there was only one house within ten miles, and that they keep big dogs there."

Another said:

"I thought I should tumble off the fence, I laughed so, when you chucked your stick at him, and he started to run, and stumbled."

"He needn't have sassed me for telling him we didn't keep tramps," the first speaker replied.

Arthur inferred from their remarks that Stub had but very recently gone by, and that doubtful courtesies had passed between him and the fellows on the fence.

Concluding that he himself had better have nothing to say to them, he tried to get by on the



farther side of the road without being observed ; but they called out to him :

"Hallo, Timothy !"

"Hallo !" said Arthur, respectfully, in fear of sticks.

At the same time he quickened his pace.

"What's your hurry ?" they called after him.

He made no reply.

"If you ketch up with a chunky feller, luggin' a chunky bag, tell him if he'll come back here I'll lick him with my little finger."

"How far ahead is he ?" Arthur asked.

"Only a few minutes."

"All right !"

And he once more began to run. He had gone a good half-mile without passing a house on either side, when he perceived an upright figure, a few rods before him, on the moonlit road.

"It's Stub !" thought he, with a swelling of the heart.

But no ; the figure, instead of moving from him, was coming towards him ; and, so far from being a "chunky" boy, it proved to be a tall man.

To him Arthur put the usual question.

"No," said the man ; "I've come about a mile, and I haven't met anybody."

"You have kept the road?" Arthur asked.

"All the way. It's an open road; and I couldn't have missed seeing anybody I met."

"Are there any houses?"

"There's one just back here,—you can see it. There isn't another for a long distance."

"He must have stopped at this first house, then," Arthur reasoned aloud.

"I should say so."

And the man resumed his walk.

Arthur went up to the door and knocked, only to learn that no stranger, boy or man, had been seen there that evening.

Standing once more in the moonlit road, Arthur was wholly at a loss what to do. For, if Stub had not stopped at this house, it seemed as if he must have gone on. Yet if he had gone on he must have been seen by the tall man.

"If the man told the truth, he must have stopped, or have turned off the road, *somewhere*," said Arthur, looking each way into the dim distance, and listening. "It would have been just like him to go into a barn."

But Arthur had seen no barn, since passing the boys on the fence, until he reached this farmhouse. There was, indeed, a barn here, but so

near the house that he did not believe Stub would have ventured to approach it.

He walked on a little farther, then turned back, thinking he would have to give up the pursuit.

"After all," he said to himself, "I might not get my money even if I should get *him*. I'd like to tell him what I think of him; but never mind! I may have another chance for that."

Still he did not give up the search without great reluctance; and he paused often, looking and listening continually for signs of the fugitive.

There was no barn, no old building of any kind that he could see, standing back in the fields. But suddenly, about half way between the last two farm-houses, a delightful odor was wafted to his nostrils.

He had noticed it a little while before he met the tall man; and for a moment it had borne his troubled soul back to his forsaken home and the peaceful haunts of his boyhood. For that moment he was no longer hunting his false friend on a lonely road by night, in a strange land, but away once more in some sweet hay-field, on a golden afternoon.

It was the fragrance of new-mown clover that filled the air. Now, however, it suggested very

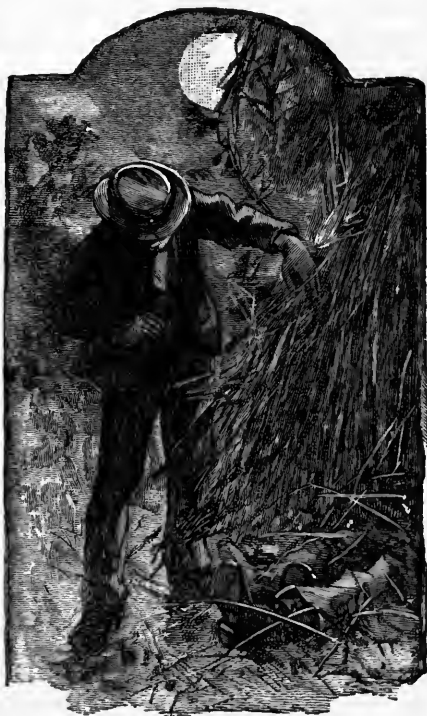
different thoughts to him as he returned by the spot. He drew near the roadside wall, and, peering over into the field, saw at a little distance rows of white-capped haycocks rising above the level ground, dim and silent in the moonlight.

"Next to hay in a barn, hay out of a barn is a good thing to sleep on," he said quietly to himself, with a thrill of expectation.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE ADVENTURE IN THE CLOVER-LOT.

ARTHUR climbed the wall softly, and stepped with slow, cautious feet over the coarse stubble of the clover-lot. In the midst he came to a halt, and glanced about him on all sides. Silence everywhere; the white caps on the low, dark,



mounds gleamed faintly in the moon ; not one, as he could see, had been removed.

Had he been wrong in the suspicion that brought him there? So sweet and comfortable a bed could be made out of one of those clover-heaps, that he half made up his mind to lie on one himself, if he could not find Stub.

He moved onward a short distance, and, returning by a different course across the field, came near stumbling over something which lay like a log in his way, stretching out from the shadow of a haycock.

But it was not a log ; it was much more like a leg. A leg, indeed, it was ; an unmistakable human leg, as Arthur saw, on drawing back and stooping to examine it.

The mate to it was drawn up near the body on a mat of hay, which had been pulled out of the side of the pile without much disturbing the cap. Close under the edge of this, half-shaded by it from the moon, was the freckled face, with interesting snub-nose and short-cropped hair, of Master Stub Culbert, fast asleep.

For two nights his sleep had been broken ; and he had not, like Arthur, enjoyed the refreshment of a nap that afternoon. Hence the heaviness of

slumber into which he must have fallen immediately on creeping into his bed of clover-hay. Not even the sound of feet walking about him, and almost over him, had given him so much as a start.

Arthur himself had had a start, which was much like a fright, on discovering the mysterious leg. He waited to regain his breath and to collect his thoughts before making another move. There he stood uncertain, timid, awe-struck, gazing down on the heavily-breathing form, so unconscious of his presence.

Now that Arthur had caught the miserable traitor, he did not know what to do with him.

There is something sacred in the sleep even of a bad man, it stretches him out so helpless, at the mercy of his foes. How can any one take advantage of that perfect trust to do an evil deed?

"I might put my hand in his pocket and help myself to his money," thought Arthur, half tempted to simplify his business with Stub in that way. "He never would know it until he woke up, when I might be miles away."

But to recover even his own money by such means seemed to him so much like stealing that he could not do it. It was almost as hard for him to make

up his mind to waken the traitor, and have his settlement with him then and there.

"I shall have a big row with him, I know," thought he. "I'd rather it should be daylight. I wish Buckhorn was here!"

He pulled some hay out of the other side of the heap, and sat down on it, to wait and think.

He thought of many things; at one of which he wondered greatly, watching there by moonlight in the solitary field, beside his sleeping comrade.

"How *could* he get such an influence over me?" he asked himself, regarding Stub with his newly-opened eyes, and knowing him now for the cowardly braggart he was. "How could I *ever* believe in him so, when I was warned a hundred times to look out for him, and I might have seen through him all the while, without any warning!"

But he had followed that strange infatuation; it had taken him from his home and brought him here.

Could he ever return to his friends after committing such folly and wrong? Shame would prevent him from doing that; and the cruel injury he had done them would, he felt sure, forever bar the way of forgiveness and reconciliation.

He remembered hearing his father say once, "If a boy of mine should take it into his silly head to



run away, I'd let him go ; you wouldn't catch me coaxing him back." True, this remark had been provoked by the conduct of some other boy, long before the good man believed his own son could ever be guilty of the same. But no doubt he had spoken as he felt.

Bitter thoughts these ! but they were wholesome to Arthur's sick and wretched heart. He was fast getting rid of his false notions, and coming to himself.

The moon shone with still brightness, the stars twinkled faintly, one large, lustrous planet rose in the east. It was a cool, dewy night ; a pale mist hung low over the sombre fields. So half an hour dragged by. Still Stub did not wake.

"I can't watch here till morning," Arthur thought. "And if I go to sleep, he may get away."

How to prevent that ?

"If I could find his bag, I might hide it — put it under my head, so that he couldn't get it without waking me up."

But the bag was already hidden ; in the hay under Stub's own head, probably. His hat, too, had been put out of sight. After puzzling his wits a minute or two over the situation, Arthur hit upon another device.

He hauled out more hay from his side of the heap, and made a good place for his head and shoulders. Then, seeing the sleeper was not in the least disturbed by these movements, he proceeded to carry out his plan.

Taking a fish-line from his pocket, he unwound the end of it, which he passed carefully under the outstretched leg. This was hardly accomplished, when Stub gave a little kick, with a muttered exclamation, —

“Give me that life-preserver!”

These words were distinct enough; the rest died away in a murmur.

“He is dreaming of the shipwreck,” Arthur thought, laughing nervously.

The kick and the outcry had given him a thrill of apprehension. But now the sleeper lay quite still again. The line was under his leg. Arthur drew it cautiously along, took a turn over the ankle, and secured the noose with a good slip-knot without further mishap.

Then, paying out two or three yards more of the line, he made the remainder fast to his own wrist. Having thus tied himself and his bed-fellow together, he gave a last look at him, scattered some hay over the loose coil on the

ground, and finally crept into his own prepared nest.

Excitement of mind kept him awake for half an hour longer. Dogs barked in the distance, and a mosquito or two hummed altogether too near. Stub snored on the other side of the fragrant clover-heap. But at length, there in the solitary, misty, moonlit field, surrounded by the dim white caps of the haycocks, and watched over by the stars, the wakeful Arthur sank into the sweet oblivion of sleep.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## ARTHUR CUTS THE STRING.

IT was broad daylight when Stub awoke the next morning, got his stupid eyes open and sat up on his bed of clover. It took a few seconds to remember where he was, the aspect of things had so changed since he lay down.

Sunrise was firing the eastern sky; fields of wondrous blue appeared through rifts in the rosy clouds, which floated far up the heavens. Cocks were crowing in distant farm-yards, and near by robins and sparrows were singing, perched on fence and tree, or on the capped haycocks of the clover-lot.

Stub slowly rose to his feet and took in the situation, with the exception of one very important particular.

"Tain't so bad, sleeping in the open air," he said to himself; adding with a grin, "A feller that lies down in his clo'es don't have to dress when he gets up in the mornin'."

He pulled his hat from under the hay-cap and put it on. Then he drew his bag from the hay that had formed his pillow, opened it and took out a piece of Job Buckhorn's hard biscuit.

He was about to take a bite, when suddenly his upraised hand paused at his mouth, and his teeth remained apart, as if he had been fixed in that interesting attitude as a model for a statue.

He had made an astonishing discovery. There, within six feet of him, on the other side of the haycock, fast asleep, lay another boy who had also used the farmer's clover for a bed, — a coincidence which appeared all the more wonderful to the astonished Stub when he recognized his companion.

"He must have follered me and come to this very tumble, and gone to sleep in it without knowing I was here!"

This was his first conjecture when his bewildered wits were clear enough to reflect at all. For it did not occur to him as a possible thing that Arthur, after finding him there, could have let him sleep on and lain down by his side.

"Maybe he couldn't wake me up," was his next thought. "I must have slep' awful hard!"

In spite of the singing birds and the first level

rays of the sun that began to strike faintly across the dewy meadows, Arthur slept on. This was a deeply interesting fact to Stub.

"I can get away from him yet!" thought he, with a cunning leer over the haycock.

He put the biscuit back into his bag without biting it, and withdrew softly, stepping sideways and glancing back towards the sleeper, who was now hidden by the intervening hay.

Then all at once some obstacle stayed Master Culbert's leg. He looked down and saw, to his surprise, that it was a stout string looped about his ankle. Then immediately a movement on the other side of the clover-heap caused him to look up again.

Arthur, roused by the twitching at his wrist, had sprung to his feet. And there, in the confusion of his sudden waking, bareheaded, his hair tumbled wildly over forehead and eyes, he stared across the haycock at Stub, who stared back at him.

Stub was the first to recover from his amazement sufficiently to speak. "How come you here?" he demanded, stooping to lay hold of the string about his leg.

"How came *you* here?" Arthur retorted, gath-

ering up his end of the line and stepping around the haycock. "You couldn't get away from me quite so easy as you thought, Stub Culbert!"

"I hain't tried to get away from you," Stub muttered, guiltily.

"Oh, you haven't, hey? You didn't steal away from me when I was asleep yesterday! And you were not trying to do the same thing just now! Oh no!" said Arthur, with contemptuous sarcasm.

"There was only a chance for one of us to stay and help the fisherman," Stub replied. "I thought I would give that to you."

"Oh, how generous!" exclaimed Arthur. "And it was to do me a particular favor, I suppose, that you ran off without letting me know it."

"I thought it would save some trouble," said Stub. "I hate good-bys! It's a tip-top chance there. I didn't suppose you would be willing to leave it for me and put out for yourself alone, as I did."

"How considerate you were!" said Arthur. "You were doing so much for me, I suppose you thought you were entitled to take all the money with you!"

Stub did not reply. He tried to slip the noose

off over his foot, but Arthur pulled the line tight.

"What's this thing you've got hitched to my leg!" young Culbert demanded, taking out his knife.

"Something to keep you from giving me the slip again when I was asleep," said Arthur.

"I don't want to give you the slip," Stub replied. "You can come along with me if you like."

"I don't want to go along with you."

"What do you want, then?"

"I want my money!"

"What do you mean, Artie?" Stub asked, assuming an innocent air. "I hain't got your money."

"Didn't you tell me to give that sharper a dollar for you to buy your ticket? That, certainly, you owe me, to say nothing of the rest of the money he got out of me. You would be willing to bear half the loss if you were any sort of a decent fellow."

"Haven't I borne it?" said Stub.

"I don't see how!"

"You don't, hey! Didn't I lay some newspapers on the bunk where you was asleep, and three



dollars in good bank bills a-top of 'em, where you couldn't help seeing 'em?" Stub replied, stoutly.

Arthur was confounded.

"I didn't see any money," he said, with a dubious look at the freckled face. "And I don't believe you left any!"

"Oh, I did! Hope to die if I didn't! I laid a two-dollar bill and a one on the papers, as sure as I live and breathe and draw the breath of life! They must have been there when you woke up, if nobody didn't come in and steal 'em."

There was once a time when Arthur would have believed a protestation of Stub's made with half the vehemence with which he uttered this. But he now required something more than the braggart's word to be convinced that he could, of his own accord, be half so generous.

"Stub," said he, "you're lying to me, I know by your eye. Now what's the use. I might have taken the money out of your pocket last night when you were asleep, but I preferred to settle with you in an open, honest way. Don't cut that line! You can't get away from me if you do."

"I don't want to get away from you, I tell you!" Stub said. "And I don't see why we should quarrel. We'll keep together if you like ;

I'll share everything with you, just as I've promised."

"You've broken your word once, and do you believe I'll trust you again?" cried Arthur. "I've been fooled by you too long already. I won't go with you; I want the money to get back home with."

"I've about made up my mind to go home myself," said Stub. "The best way is to go on to Landport and take the steamboat. I will, if you will."

"Show you're in earnest," said Arthur, "by going back with me to the fisherman's, where I've left my bag. After I get that, I'll go to Landport and take the steamboat with you."

"It's a long way back to Buckhorn's," Stub muttered, discontentedly. "I'll wait for you; there ain't no use of our both going. Or why do you mind about the bag? You can write to Buckhorn to send it by express after we get home."

"But there's something else to go back for, even if I should do that."

"What?" Stub asked.

"The money you left for me on the bunk," said Arthur.

Stub grinned as he replied, —

"Never mind about that; most likely it's lost; I've got more."

"Then give me my share," said Arthur, "if you won't go back with me."

"Seems as if you hadn't a bit of confidence in me," Stub remonstrated.

"Not a bit!" said Arthur. "I won't trust you out of my sight; not even the length of this line!"

"You can't force me to give you money," Stub said, defiantly.

"Perhaps not. I didn't rob you in your sleep, and I don't intend to rob you awake. But look here, Stub! Remember how you induced me to run away with you," Arthur went on, with rising emotion. "Think how you promised to stand by me and be my friend to the last. I left everything—I've broken my mother's heart, I know!—to come with you!"

"Oh, don't talk that way!" said Stub, scowling and wincing.

"Then, when the lady on the steamboat wanted me to go with her, you wouldn't let me, because she didn't want you. I threw away that chance, because *I* wouldn't be a traitor to my friend. Now how *can* you fling me off in this way without a penny in my pocket?"

"We'll stick together, I say!" Stub exclaimed impatiently.

"Whether we stick together or not, give me my money now! You can't refuse me that, Stub!" And Arthur held out his hand.

After a good deal of growling and grimacing, Stub put his reluctant hand into his pocket and handed out a dollar.

"Is that all you will give me?" said Arthur, with eyes flashing through tears,

"It's all I really owe you. I *did* let you give a dollar to buy my ticket, though I never had the ticket. But I don't owe you anything more."

"No part of what I gave the sharper with your knowledge and consent, and as much on your account as my own?"

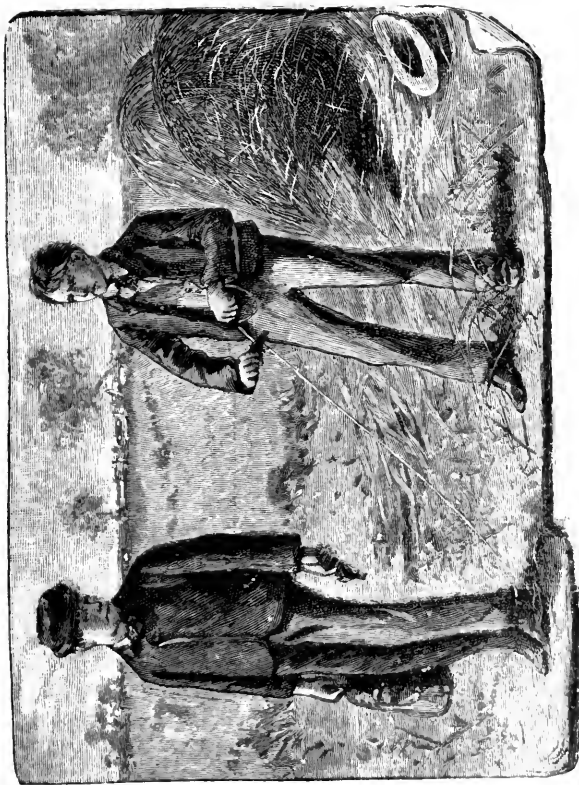
"Only so much;" Stub extended the dollar. "Take that."

Somehow Arthur's heart had grown strong since he set off in pursuit of the fellow the night before. He regarded him with burning indignation.

"I won't touch it!" he said.

"Why not?" said Stub, wonderingly. "You're the queerest fellow ever I sor!"

"It isn't enough to take me home, and if you won't give me more you may keep every cent,—



SO SAYING, WITH HIS OWN HAND HE CUT THE LINE. Page 159.



mean, miserable, shirking scoundrel as you are!" Arthur exclaimed, all afire with his sense of wrong.

"Call me a scoundrel?" and Stub advanced threateningly towards him.

"I do!" said Arthur, standing his ground. "A worse scoundrel than the sharper who swindled us. He took in strangers. You have cheated, forsaken and turned against a friend! O Stub!" he exclaimed, bursting into tears, "that has been the hardest thing to bear! I didn't think you would do it!"

So saying, with his own hand he cut the line that bound his comrade to him, and turned to put on his hat.

"I mean to be fair with you," said Stub, quailing under these just reproaches, and touched a little by Arthur's tears. "You'd better take the dollar."

He could not make up his mind to offer more. As Arthur, without deigning to reply, busied himself repairing the damage he had done to the haycock, Stub once more proposed that they should keep together.

"I want nothing of you or your money," Arthur answered, curtly, stuffing the clover back under the hay-cap.

"Then I don't see what you followed me for," said Stub.

"I'm glad I followed you," Arthur replied. "I'd rather part with you this way than have you sneak away from me as you did yesterday. Now we understand each other. Keep the money!" he added, walking proudly off. "I can do without it and without you!"

Stub gazed after him for a minute or two, his face so red that you could hardly have distinguished the freckles. Then, muttering some words of self-defence, which Arthur did not heed in the least, Master Culbert put the money back into his pocket, kicked the fragment of fish-line from his ankle, and without stopping to rebuild his side of the haycock, walked away in another direction, shaking his short-cropped head.



## CHAPTER XX.

## AT WORK FOR JOB.

JOB BUCKHORN was on the wharf cleaning his fish, which he had brought in from the sea that morning, when a flushed and tired-looking boy came around the old fish-house and stood before him.

"Well, well, youngster!" he said, "what's the news with you?"

"Nothing to boast of," Arthur replied.

And in a few words he related his adventure.

Job laughed quietly, and Arthur had to laugh with him, over the little stratagem of the string tied to Stub's ankle. But the boy's lip quivered, and his tears started again, when he came to tell of his final parting with Culbert.

"I don't blame you for bein' mad and disgusted," Buckhorn said, his own eyes glistening with sympathy. "But you did wrong to refuse the dollar. Money is money, and you ought to've took what you could get."

"Perhaps," said Arthur. "But I couldn't touch

it. And I haven't been sorry yet, though I've walked all the way back without breakfast, because I had no money and I wouldn't beg."

"Well, I like your spunk," said Job, with a kind smile lighting his face. "Breakin' with that scamp has done you good. You've got somethin' by it better'n money."

"I don't know about that," Arthur replied, with a wistful, doubting look.

"I know it!" Job gave him a significant nod and smile. "You ain't the same boy you was when I brought you in here with him yesterday."

"I hope not!" said Arthur, fervently.

He had something more to say, and, after a quick, deep breath or two, and a few faltering, uncertain words, he went on, with glowing cheeks and a voice full of emotion:—

"I thought of it this morning! As I was coming back along the road, after leaving him—it was sunrise, and the birds were singing, and everything was dewy and fresh—something came to me then. I don't know what it was, but I was almost happy. I could hardly believe I was the same boy he had made such a fool of, and I wasn't the same, and I never will be the same again."

"That's the way to talk!" said Job, understanding a good deal more in the boy's stammered words than they expressed. "What do you think you'll do?"

"I haven't made up my mind yet; I don't know what I *can* do. But this one thing; I'm not going to send for, nor beg nor borrow, money to go home with. If I go at all, I'm going to earn the money."

"That's right! that's plucky!" said Job.

"I should like to begin and work for you, and see if I am good for anything," Arthur continued.

"I like that!" Buckhorn exclaimed. "What pay do you expect?"

"Whatever you think I'm worth."

"I like that again! When do you want to commence?"

"Now!"

"All right, my boy! *Now* it shall be. I haven't had *my* breakfast yet; I was kind o' waiting for you to come round. Suppose you start a fire in the stove, and then go over to the old well for water—but never mind about that!" Job added, quickly. "You've been on them little legs o' your'n enough for one morning, with an empty stomach."

"They're a good pair of legs yet," said Arthur, entering the hut.

He uncovered the stove, cleared the grate, and looked about for kindlings. His eye fell upon the copies of *The Boys' Own* which Stub had left. He seized one, and tore it with a vindictive laugh, saying as he thrust it into the stove and touched a match to it:—

"You'll help me get breakfast, and it's the first good you've ever done, you humbug-heroes! Squirm, *Little Whiffet*! Roast, *Sol Slasher*! Good-bye, *Left-Handed Luke*, you *Lion-Hearted Lad Lost on Labrador*! I've had enough of you!"

He laid splinters on the blazing paper, fine wood on the splinters; and, lastly, coarser wood on the fine. The other papers he tore into shreds, and rolled into wads, and thrust into the wood-box. Then taking the empty pail he went to the well for water.

That was the beginning.

Arthur got through the day so well that Job had good reason to express his satisfaction with him, as they sat together once more at supper.

"Well, youngster! you've took hold wonderful, and helped me lots! I guess, by the way you've

slicked up my shebang, you've been used to keeping things neat and tidy at home."

"I never kept things neat and tidy," said Arthur. "My mother and sister always had to pick up after me. I never could, or would, take care of things."

"That's curis!" said Job. "But you have washed dishes before?"

"Never in my life," Arthur replied. "If I had been asked to do such a thing at home I should have thought I was insulted."

"That's curis, too! But you've been kind o' happy, hain't you? I've noticed you whistling now and then."

"Did I whistle?" Arthur thought a moment. "The truth is, I've been interested in what I was doing; and that makes a big difference with a fellow. At home I never was interested in any work I had to do; and I was discontented because it took just so much time from my play."

"I can understand it," said Buckhorn. "It was jes' so with me. It's jes' so with heaps of boys. Throw 'em on their own resources and it brings about a mighty change in 'em. Now do you want to go out with me and help take the fish off the trawl in the morning?"

"That's exactly what I want!" Arthur exclaimed.

"Then you'd better turn in as soon as you can and get your sleep the first part of the night, for I mean to start at half-past three."

Arthur acted upon this advice; and he was tired enough to fall asleep about as soon as he had thrown himself into his bunk.

He slept soundly in spite of a few mosquitoes, until he was awakened at dawn by Job's broad hand on his shoulder, and Job's voice in his ear. "Come, youngster, if you're goin' with me. Stay and have your nap out, if you'd ruther, and get the breakfast started time I come back."

"I'd rather go with you!"

And Arthur tumbled himself out upon the floor.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## UNDERRUNNING THE TRAWL.

HIS jacket but half-buttoned, and the sleep hardly yet out of his eyes, Arthur descended the slimy wharf-ladder to the dory, which was stranded at low tide below. Job followed, and pushed off into the now shallow, narrow stream. The boy sat in the stern as they glided past the wharf, which loomed high and shadowy above them, with its dark timbers and gray barnacled legs exposed by the ebb. Then along by the oozy banks, blue tinted with clustering mussels at the edge of the clear sea-water, and out upon the swells rolling in from the bar, the light skiff sped and tossed.

There was no wind. The ocean heaved with long, slow undulations, smooth as silk, breaking into fields of foam on one side, and the other spreading out in a vast expanse, soft and bright, with all the colors of the morning sky.

"Take your bearin's, youngster," said Job,

"so's to learn the course. Notice, soon as I bring that p'int of rocks in range with the corner of the hotel piazzer, then I pull straight out."

"That will bring you to the trawl?"

"You watch and see."

"You came in more from that direction the other morning," said Arthur, pointing. "You crossed the rol'ers on the bar, and you are keeping clear away from them now."

"I had been out of my way to pick up you silly boys in the water," said Job. "It was right off there"—he glanced over his left shoulder—"where your steamboat lay. What a fog!"

"It seems a week ago—a month!" Arthur exclaimed. "How long is it? I can't remember! Three days?"

"Only two, if I know how to count. But a good deal has happened to you, youngster, since then!"

Arthur remained silent and thoughtful, while Buckhorn pulled steadily into the brightening east.

Arthur looked back for his bearings, and forward to see the sun come up out of the sea. Suddenly he called out:—

"What's that rocking there on the swells? and there, too, farther on! Your floats?"



"Them's the floats," replied the fisherman. "Here we be at the trawl. Now, youngster, we'll see if there's anything on the hooks."

Just then the curved edge of the red sun cut the horizon and up came the whole, huge, dimly glorious orb, resting for an instant like a ball of fire on the rim of the sea, then slowly soaring, and brightening as it soared, above the shining waves.

Meanwhile Job Buckhorn shipped his oars, caught the nearest buoy with his boat-hook, and drew the dory alongside.

"Now, there's a chance for you, youngster!"

Finding a suspended line attached to the main line, which extended from float to float, he hauled it up a little way and handed the loop to Arthur.

"Pull in," said he, "and you'll have the first fish."

"Oh! isn't he a big fellow!" cried Arthur, pulling with all his might, hand over hand, while his eyes gleamed with excitement.

It was a good-sized cod which the boy drew up to the gunwale, and after a brief struggle pulled, violently flopping, over into the dory.

"What makes you tremble so?" said Job Buckhorn, with a good-natured laugh.

"I don't know! I never caught a big fish before!" Arthur answered, with panting breath.

"You had the luck to get one that hadn't been long hooked," said the fisherman, as he took the fish from the line and dropped it into the tub.

"How do you know that?" Arthur asked.

"He's so lively. Sometimes I find every fish on the hooks dead."

"How dead?"

"Drowned."

"Drowned?" said Arthur. "I didn't know you could drown a fish!"

"Pr'aps I should say choked. The hook with the big bait in their gullets kills 'em. Now you'll see!"

In fact, the very next fish they pulled up was as dead as if it had been out of the water an hour. So with the next and the next; a disappointing discovery to Arthur, who said he didn't think there was so much sport in taking fish that were not alive.

"This ain't sport at all," Buckhorn replied. "It's business."

On some of the hooks no fish at all were found, either dead or alive; and Job pronounced the re-

sult, after the trawl was underrun, as a "pooty slim haul. I shouldn't wonder, though, if we carried home a few more fish than we've got, and had a little of what you call sport, besides. See that black ripple on the water?"

"Yes! What is it? Just a gust of wind in that spot?" cried Arthur.

"There ain't a hatfull of wind on the ocean, fur as you can see," Buckhorn replied. "And that spot, as you call it, covers several acres. It's coming towards us."

Arthur was amazed to see all the sea so calm, with only that "black ripple" breaking the satin sheen of the long, sweeping undulations.

"It can't be fish!" he exclaimed.

"Fish it is, youngster! A school of mackerel. Mackerel enough to sink a hundred dories like this, if they was all piled into 'em. See that dash of bright spray run along over the surface?"

Arthur had seen it glistening like silver under the morning sun.

"That's where some big fish was after 'em, and they jumped to get out of his way. There they fly again!"

"Can't we get some of 'em?"

"Youngster, that's jest what I propose to do.

We've a little time to spare; some good clam-bait; and I always bring my mackerel lines with me. Here! you are going to learn to row on salt water. Take the oars and pull out there towards 'em, while I get out the hooks."

## CHAPTER XXII.

## MACKEREL AND CLAMS.

ARTHUR was used to rowing on the still water of Lommond's Pond; and he was soon able to adapt his stroke to the motion of the swells.

"Well done, youngster!" cried Job. "You'll make a fisherman. Though you'll find it a leetle mite different when you come to row in a smart gale over chop seas. Now stiddy! We may strike 'em anywhere."

He dropped the leaded lines, with the baited hooks, overboard. There was a pause of expectation. They were still some rods away from the ripple; Arthur moving slowly. There suddenly came a jerk at both lines at once; and Buckhorn cried out:—

"Ship oars! we're all right! Haul in that line I've got my foot on!"

Arthur dropped oars and stumbled in headlong-fashion at the line, which he caught and hauled. Up it came with a lively fish on the end of it, a mate to the fine mackerel Job had just caught.

Then followed sport, indeed. Almost as fast as the hooks could be baited and thrown out they were taken, and hauled in with dancing mackerel attached.

Job, with his long practice, caught about two fish to Arthur's one, besides opening all the clams used for bait. In half an hour the tub was full to running over, and the bottom of the dory was covered.

Then came a lull. The school was gone. Not another bite!

"Queer, isn't it?" said Arthur.

"It's queer, but that's the way of it," Buckhorn replied. "And it's all right. We've had a good streak of luck, and it's time to be pulling home."

He rolled up his line and took the oars. Just then Arthur, who had hopefully left his line in the water until the last moment, gave a jerk and cried out,—

"Here they come again! I've got one!"

But what he had really got made Job laugh, as it came dangling into the boat. It was that hideous creature, hated of fishermen, called a sculpin. Arthur looked at the monstrous eyes and gasping mouth, and the bristling spines and frills, with a shudder of dismay.

"That's luck; fisherman's luck, and other people's luck, too!" Job remarked. "Life ain't all cod and mackerel. Just as we sometimes begin to think it is, along comes a dog-fish, or a devil-fish, to remind us. Wind up, youngster!" he added, having shown Arthur how, by a quick and simple process, to get rid of his rough customer without handling him.

Notwithstanding some hard biscuit he had had to nibble, Arthur was hungry enough when they got back to the wharf. He was not long in kindling a fire in the stove; and soon the skillet was ready for a pair of the freshly-caught mackerel, which Job had in the meanwhile dressed.

Simple and rude as the breakfast was, Arthur had rarely eaten with better appetite; and he declared that he had never, at home, known what a fresh mackerel was.

"You that live a little back from the sea never get a fresh mackerel," said Job. "You can't even pack it in ice so that it'll be quite so good and sweet, after a little while, as when it's first lifted out of the water. But you've worked for your breakfast, youngster! That's what gives it a relish more'n anything else."

The appearance of mackerel in large schools off

shore, that day, made matters lively at the mouth of Crab Creek. Many boats went out for them, —among others, the *Jolly Rover*, with a large party on board ; — and clam-bait was in demand. Job's supply was exhausted long before it could be replenished, at low tide, in the afternoon.

As soon as the flats were uncovered, Buckhorn was off in his dory, taking along Arthur, who was to have his first lesson in clam-digging. The boy pulled off his shoes in the boat, and leaped out, with rolled-up trousers and bare legs, the moment the bow slid up on the sloping mud.

He looked down at his splashed feet, and smiled ruefully as he remembered the young clam-diggers who had given Stub and his canoe so rough a reception. How outlandish they had appeared to the fastidious Arthur ! How undesirable their occupation ! And now here he was, so soon, walking bare-legged in the ooze, swinging a clam-hoe for his livelihood !

"It's easy enough to find the critters, if you only go where they be," Job explained. "Where ye see these here little holes in the mud, down to the bottom of every one there's a clam. That's his doorway for communication with the world, which for him is the ocean, when the tide is in.



It's the pipe he sucks his livin' through. He's shy and watchful, even down there in the mud. See !”

Job stamped on the ground, and each little hole near his foot threw out its quick fountain-spurt of water, as if the startled bivalve below had suddenly closed his siphon.

“That shows they're lively ! Now fall to, youngster ! Do as I do.”

Easy as it was to discover where the clams were embedded, there was labor in the digging, and Arthur had a good backache before their baskets were filled.

The carefully-reared boy was beginning to learn what he had never known before — what hard work was.

“If my father had ever set me to doing this,” thought he, “what would I have said ?”

But he did not shrink from this, nor from any other task which Buckhorn gave him to do.

The next day was Sunday, and he was glad of a little rest. He put on his best clothes, and wandered along the rocky shore, or on the beach, his soul fed by deeper and more serious thoughts than had ever come to him in all his life before.

What were his folks at home doing that quiet

Sunday morning? Were they thinking of him? Or had they ceased to wonder at his strange, his unnatural and cruel conduct?

He had not yet been able to make up his mind to write to them. Shame kept him from doing even so much to repair the great wrong he had committed; his soul was still dark on that side. The more he thought upon his duty towards them, the deeper he was plunged in doubt, homesickness, and remorse. He often thought regretfully of his Good Angel of the steamboat, wondering what would have happened if he had accepted her invitation and followed her advice.

He had heard of the passengers who landed in the steamer's boats that morning of fright and fog, and rode over to take the cars, after breakfasting at the Longcliff Hotel. He could not doubt but she and her uncle were among them. Ah, if he had only known it at the time! Yet, even if he had, would he have had the courage to put himself again in her way, or to let her know that he was so near?

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## HOW ARTHUR EARNED A QUARTER.

ON Monday morning, the regular round of work re-commenced, and continued through the week, varied by incidents which had the charm of novelty to our inexperienced boy.

The little harbor of the creek was often a scene of fresh and breezy life. One day the mackerel came in with the flood tide, and the surface of the water, almost from the sea to the village, was black with them. Wharves and bridges were fairly fringed with fishing-lines; and in a few hours' time barrels of these fine fish were taken. Arthur would have been glad to throw in his hook from the wharf, but he was kept too busy furnishing bait to the others.

Pleasure yachts visited the harbor; and now and then a coaster came in to tie up over night at the wharf. Then there were the constant rowing and sailing, by people of the village and the hotel, when wind and tide served.

Nearly every day when there was a favorable breeze *The Jolly Rover* took out its sailing or fishing party. Job sometimes sailed her himself, and Arthur had a good deal to do with her, from first to last, now putting the bait aboard and now taking her line when she approached the wharf.

One day, she came beating in at high tide against a light wind; Arthur had caught her line and made it fast, and was waiting to see her passengers land, when the sight of a face on board filled him with a quick and strange excitement.

It was a woman's youthful face; one that, long as he might live, he believed he could never forget; the face, in effect, of his Good Angel of the steamboat, whom he feared to have lost forever.

He did not know that she had come back to the hotel to pass a few days with some friends; the sight of her was so great a surprise to him that for a minute he could neither move nor speak. He felt as if he stood in the presence of fate.

She was talking pleasantly with her friends, and did not seem to look at him at all. Indeed, what was there in the figure of a dazed, awkward, inarticulate fisher-boy to attract the attention of one like her?

His clothes had become sadly streaked and

soiled by his occupation. A broad-brimmed straw hat, which Job had bought for him at the village, seemed to complete his disguise, so that she might not have recognized him, even if she had regarded him closely.

"Here, youngster! look alive!" cried Job on board. "Take them shawls!"



The shawls had been taken up by the lady herself as she was about to step from the sail-boat to the wharf. Arthur started forward, with outstretched hand, to relieve her.

"Thank you!" she said, pleasantly, but looked another way to see that one of her friends got safely ashore. Arthur stood holding the shawls, trembling with agitation and still unable to utter a word.

There were four or five ladies of the party and as many gentlemen; cultivated, social, happy people, inhabitants of another world than his, as it seemed to Arthur. Why should they give a thought to a wretch like him?

They were talking quite gayly of their prosperous voyage, and he was waiting for her to turn once more and give him a single glance, ashamed, yet anxious to be seen.

But she passed from the wharf without looking back. And a foppish young fellow of the party said to Arthur, as he would have spoken to any bootblack or porter, —

"Here, boy! what do you stand staring there for? Bring those shawls and this basket along up to the hotel, will you?"

The basket was no burden, but he evidently

deemed it a servant's duty to bear it. He walked on with the party, while poor Arthur stared none the less, I assure you, for the rude command he had received.

He did not wait long, however. Dirty and degraded and wretched as he felt, he was still under the influence of a fascination, if not a hope, which impelled him to follow her.

So he took up the basket the young man had set down, and bore it with the bundle of shawls up the long, winding way to the hotel.

The party, still chatting merrily, — living their beautiful life so far from him, so utterly oblivious of him — mounted the piazza and entered the hall. When he passed the door, the ladies had disappeared, and their voices could be heard in passages farther on.

"Drop 'em here," said the foppish young fellow, looking around for the basket and shawls.

Arthur dropped them.

"But don't drop this!" And the young fellow put a piece of money into his hand.

Arthur hardly knew that he took it, until going down the slope from the hotel he looked to see what he was clutching so angrily in his fingers, and found it was a quarter of a dollar.

That did not console him for his disappointment; it added another burden to his sense of misery and degradation.

"She didn't know me! She didn't even see me! And she never will know I saw her and almost touched her hand to-day."

So thought the unhappy boy as with quivering limbs and an unspeakably heavy heart he returned to the hut on the wharf, which was his home.

He was singularly absent-minded that afternoon, trying to muster courage to let his Angel know, by some means, that he was so near. How should he manage it?

"I'll talk with Job," thought he.

He got their supper ready and waited anxiously for Buckhorn to come and sit down with him.

"He'll tell me what I'd better do," he said to himself. "It'll be a comfort to talk with him, anyway."



## CHAPTER XXIV.

## GOING FOR THE DOCTOR.

**B**UT Job was late, having been up to the village on some errand. And when at last he returned, he was in so silent and morose a mood, that Arthur, who had never seen him so before, did not know what to make of it.

The fisherman sat down on the wharf and looked darkly at the outrunning tide. Arthur, who had spoken to him two or three times without getting any response, went up and touched his shoulder.

"Mr. Buckhorn!" he said; "didn't you hear? Supper is ready and has been waiting ever so long."

"Let me alone!" said Job, with a shudder. "I'll eat supper when I get ready."

It was the first time he had ever spoken crossly to Arthur. In his present state such unkind words from his only friend were too much for the poor boy. Of course he could not think of opening his heart and telling his trouble to Job that night.

He went and sat down alone at the table, but could not eat. Buckhorn in a little while came to the door of the hut, and looking in with a strangely flushed and haggard face, saw Arthur crying.

"I beg your pardon, youngster," he said, in an unsteady voice. "I didn't mean to be short with you. I don't think I care for supper to-night."

"Are you sick?" Arthur asked, forgetting his own distress at sight of Job's rolling eyes.

"I ain't well, youngster. Fact, I've been feeling queerish all the afternoon. I went up to the 'pothecary's for some medicine. Mebby it'll bring me round. Guess I'll turn in."

Job staggered into the hut and rolled into the bunk with his clothes on.

"Can't I do something for you?" Arthur anxiously asked.

"Nary thing. Jest le'me sleep if I can. We must get off to the trawl early in the mornin', youngster. Good-night!"

Arthur cleared the table with as little noise as possible, and then got into his own bunk, where he soon fell asleep.

He was awakened some time in the night by an unusual disturbance, which had ceased, however, by the time his senses were fully roused.

The moonlight lay in the open door of the hut. He sat up and listened; only the roaring of the sea broke the silence. Then he put down his hand to Job's berth. It was empty.

"He must have got up and gone out to his trawl without me," thought Arthur.

He lay down, thinking he would sleep some



more, when, amidst the thunder of the distant surf, a sound like a groan reached his ear.

Arthur threw himself from the bunk, and struggling into his clothes, hurried out upon the wharf, where he was near stumbling over an object that lay stretched out in the moonlight.

He started back in great fright, but hearing the groans again, and believing it must be Job who

had fallen there, he went forward and bent over the prostrate form.

"Is it you, Mr. Buckhorn?" he cried, in a loud voice.

"Ah, youngster!" said the fisherman, rousing from his stupor. "I believe I've had a—I don't know!"

"Did you fall?" said Arthur, still in great fear at the mysterious occurrence.

"I must have fallen," said Job feebly, trying to sit up with the boy's help. "I couldn't sleep. I thought I would go out to the trawl; didn't know but the rowing would make me feel better. I was coming for the dory. There, there, youngster! No use! Le'me lay down again."

"You are very sick!" Arthur exclaimed.

"I seem to be took as my pardner was. I believe I've got his fever."

"Oh, I hope not! I'll go for the doctor!"

"All right, youngster! I s'pose I must have him, and the sooner the better," said Job, with another groan.

Arthur wished to get Buckhorn back into the hut before leaving him. But Job said he would stay where he was.

"I can get back myself, if I want to. But I

prefer the open air. Take the dory, and you may bring the doctor back with you."

"Can I row as quick as I can run?"

"You can get the doctor here as soon," said Job. "Tide has jest turned. You won't have much of a current agin ye pullin' up, but it'll be strong when you're comin' back with it."

Arthur hastened to light a lantern, and brought out blankets to make Buckhorn comfortable in his absence.

"Look here, youngster," said the fisherman, as the boy was arranging his head, "I'm feeling better. I don't believe there's any need of the doctor. It's too bad to let you pull up the crick alone in the night—a boy like you!"

"I'm glad you're better. But I am going anyway," said Arthur, resolutely.

He placed the lantern on the wharf, stepped into the dory with the oars, and pushed off on the still and solitary flood.

It was a ghastly, sorrowful, one-sided old moon in the sky that saw him depart from his sick friend, and glide away into the gloom. The oars dripped and splashed, the rowlocks clanked, the breakers on the beach kept up their eternal roar; sounds which seemed to add to the loneliness of the night.

Above the track of broken gleams which spread on the water behind him, he watched the red ray of the lantern on the wharf, until a point of rocks in a bend of the stream hid it from view. Then he felt himself utterly alone. There was not a light in the village beyond; nor a sound, save where the tide rippled against the shadowy piers.

Landing at a wharf he knew, Arthur made fast the dory, and found his way into the street. Then which way to turn? The doctor's was a corner house; so much he knew; but which corner?

Fearful of dogs, fearful of being taken for a thief, he groped from house to house, until he believed he had found the right door. He stood on the shadowy steps and timidly pulled the bell-handle.

Instantly a dog set up a vociferous barking within; and a moment after a voice startled him, it sounded so close to his ear.

"Who is it?"

Arthur looked around, hesitating, bewildered; when the voice called again:

"Who's there? speak in the tube."

He then discovered that the words came from the mouth of a tube just above the bell-pull. So he put his lips to it and made known his errand.

"Very well," was the response. "I'll go as soon as I can harness my horse."

"I've come with a dory," said Arthur.

"That will do," said the speaking-tube. "I'll be with you in a minute."

The barking of the dog had ceased as soon as the talking began. There was now a brief silence; then the door was opened, and the doctor—a portly figure in a wide-brimmed dark hat—appeared, to the great comfort of the anxious boy.

Arthur related more particularly the symptoms in Job's case as he walked by the doctor's side, through shine and shadow, to the wharf.

"I understand, I understand," was the brief, emphatic response.

"Do you think it's the same sickness his partner has had?" Arthur inquired.

"I'm afraid it is," the doctor replied. "There's something wrong about that place. Who is there to take care of Mr. Buckhorn?"

"Nobody but me," said Arthur.

"You!" The portly doctor gave his small guide a quick glance from under his dark hat-brim. "What can *you* do for a sick man?"

"Not much, I suppose. Though I believe I

could do a good deal, if I only knew how," said Arthur.

He held the dory against the pier until the doctor had stepped in and taken his seat in the stern. Then he too leaped aboard and pushed off.

The current, as Job had predicted, was by this time running strong. The tidal wave receding, the creek, which had been flooded by it to the brim, was making haste to empty itself again. Arthur rowed into the middle of the stream, along by the edges of which he had come up, and felt something stronger than his arms at the oars bearing him away.

The doctor—a picturesque object, under his wide-brimmed moonlit hat—sat for a long while silent in the stern, his great weight tilting the bow well up out of the stream. Then all of a sudden he said,—

"Where do you get your water down there at the wharf?"

Arthur, thinking at first only of the ocean and the plenteous tides, echoed doubtfully, —

"Water?"

"Yes. What you drink and use in cooking."

"Oh!" said Arthur, "we get that from an old well just back of the wharf."



"I understand!" said the doctor.

Little more was said until the red light of the lantern came into view, around the point of rocks; and guided by its beams, Arthur pulled for the wharf.

## CHAPTER XXV.

## ARTHUR WRITES A LETTER.

THEY found Job sitting on the threshold of the hut, with his head on his hands.

"Well, my friend!" said the doctor, going up to him and feeling his pulse. "What's the matter with you?"

"I don't seem to be jest right, somehow, doctor," Buckhorn replied, with an attempt at cheerfulness. "I've got about as miserable a dizzy achin' head as was ever set on a man's shoulders to trouble him; one while I'm hot as fire, then a chill takes me. I'm afraid I'm a good deal as Dorr was."

"This isn't a very good place for you to be sick in," said the doctor. "I think you had better do as Dorr did,—go to your friends as soon as possible."

"There's this difference 'twixt Dorr and me," said Buckhorn. "He had friends to go to, and I hain't; nary friend, doctor! And no place to

drop anchor in but this, where you find my miserable hulk keeled up."

Arthur, who had been listening eagerly to this dialogue, here broke in.

"Don't say you haven't a friend, Mr. Buckhorn!"

"Oh! is that you, youngster?" said Job. "I forgot."

"Whether you stay here or go away," said Arthur, "I—I'll stick by you as long as I can do you any good. I"—

He was going to say more, but something like a great lump came up in his throat.

"I think we'd better get you into your bunk, Job," the doctor then said. "I don't want you to get out of it until I come again."

"I'll do just as you say, doctor," Job replied, humbly. "But, bear in mind, there's my trawl to be looked after some time to-day. I think, with my youngster's help, I can 'tend to that."

"I can row," said Arthur.

"No matter who rows," said the doctor, in a deliberate, impressive tone of voice; "I don't believe, Job, that you'll get out to your trawl for some days to come. Don't think of that, nor of anything else that will trouble your mind. The trawl's of no consequence just now."

"Why, doctor!" Job began to remonstrate, when Arthur interrupted him.

"I can pull out and underrun the trawl alone; I know I can!"

"I believe you can, youngster!"

Job turned in his bunk, which they had by this time got him into, and added,—

"That boy's a brick, doctor! I didn't s'pose he'd earn much more'n his salt when he took holt here to help me. But I've made up my mind he's worth three dollars a week to me; and I'm going to pay him five dollars, honest wages, soon as I can collect some bills. Remember that, doctor!"

As Buckhorn had been rather silent on this important subject, and Arthur had been hitherto unable to form any idea how much he was to receive, these words were a joyful surprise to him. Three dollars a week! five dollars already earned! At this rate he could soon return home, with money in his pocket after all expenses of his journey and of damage to his clothing had been paid.

His thoughts were quickly brought back from their flight in this direction by the sight of Job in his bunk, and the doctor preparing some medicine for him by the light of the lantern. What if this

good friend of his should be very sick ! Of course he could not think of home as long as his help was needed here.

"I will never desert *him* !" he exclaimed within himself, turning an anxious look on the sick man.

"What water is this?" said the doctor, as he was about to dissolve a powder in a glass Arthur gave him.

"I brought it from the well at supper-time," said Arthur. "I can get some fresh in a minute, if you'd rather have it."

"I would prefer it," the doctor replied. "Do you suppose you can get some from the hotel at this time of night?"

Arthur said he would try, and eagerly took up the pail.

"That will be better," said the doctor. "And look here, my boy ! Don't give him any water from that old well, nor use any yourself, — mind what I say, — for the present. Not a drop !"

"Do you think there is anything wrong with the water?" Arthur asked, wonderingly.

"No matter what I think. Do as I tell you," said the doctor.

"I will !" Arthur answered fervently and promptly.

He hurried off with the pail and rapidly climbed the barren, rocky, moonlit slope on the summit of which the great hotel loomed against the sky. The voice of the sea came to him with a louder roar as he ascended ; and the breakers on the long beach appeared, spreading far and wide, white in the moon. All the rest of the world was dim and still.

"*She* is asleep in one of those rooms up there," thought Arthur, remembering the occasion of his unhappy visit to the hotel that afternoon. "But I mustn't think of that now."

Many recollections rushed through his excited mind, — his leaving home, the steamboat voyage and the accident which had brought him to Job's hut ; Job lying sick down there now, with no friend but him ; his Good Angel again so near, but as oblivious of him as if he had never existed, — all mingling somehow with the solemnity of the night and the roar of the sea.

"How strange it all is !" he said, from a heart full of unutterable emotions. "Am I myself? Am I awake? Oh, what will happen to me next?"

He got the water without much difficulty, and taking it to the doctor, received his instructions with regard to the sick man.

"Is he *very* sick?" Arthur asked, following him out of the hut.

"Not so sick as I am afraid he will be before he is better," was the significant reply. "I shall be down here again by twelve o'clock."

"I am glad!" said Arthur, gratefully. "I wish there wasn't such an awful tide now to pull against; I would row you back up the creek."

"Never mind about that; I can walk. Besides," the doctor turned to add, "I don't want you to leave Job alone, not even for five minutes."

"Then I can't go out to the trawl?"

"Not unless you leave somebody to look after him in your place."

So saying the portly doctor tramped away under his dark-brimmed hat.

Arthur went back to the cabin, and at Job's request placed the lantern outside. Then, having nothing else to do, he sat down in the door to watch and think.

The tide was going out with a mighty rush, gurgling and sobbing against the wharf. A fishing dory from the village went by, and was soon lost to sight in the gloom which hung over the sea. The sick man in the hut breathed heavily, with now and then a faint moan. With nothing to do

but to wait, Arthur felt wretchedly sick at heart, and thought daylight would never come.

But the night—as even the longest and saddest night must—did at length draw to a close. The moonlight faded into early twilight, surrounding objects grew gradually more distinct, the dark stream became lucid with soft and lovely tints under the dawn, and the first fresh rays of sunrise swept across the level deep.

At the same time a sudden light flashed across his troubled mind. “I will write to my mother!”

Why had he so long neglected to follow his Good Angel’s good advice?

He did not know. Now, however, the consciousness of her near presence, Job’s sickness, the meditations of the night, and a foreboding of some dread thing yet to come, quickened his sense of duty, and brought him to this resolution.

“I will write to her now! I will tell her not to worry about me; I am earning my living, and they will see me before long.”

He knew where Job kept some paper that he made out his bills on. He found a sheet, a brown envelope, some thick ink in the bottom of an ink-stand, and a very bad pen.

With much labor, thinking over many times



what he should say and what he should leave unsaid, he wrote his letter, sitting in the door of the hut, and using an overturned bucket for a desk.

It was a dreadful scrawl; for Arthur was a poor penman, much as he had been at school; and he had never written a letter before in his life.



But awkward and unsightly as it was, would it not be a priceless joy to his mother, if ever it should meet her eyes? To know that her boy, still precious to her soul, undutiful as he had been, was not dead, but alive, and that she could hope to see him soon once more!

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## "A LITTLE HERO."

THIS duty done, a great burden was lifted from Arthur's heart. But he could not be at ease until the letter was mailed.

The morning stage was just leaving the hotel for the railroad station; it would pass within a dozen rods of the wharf. Seeing it coming down the hill, he ran out and waylaid it and handed his poor little missive up to the driver, paying the postage out of the quarter he had earned the day before. Then he went back and watched with the sick man until the doctor came again at noon.

"Well, how has he been?" said that portly gentleman, getting out of his buggy at the edge of the wharf.

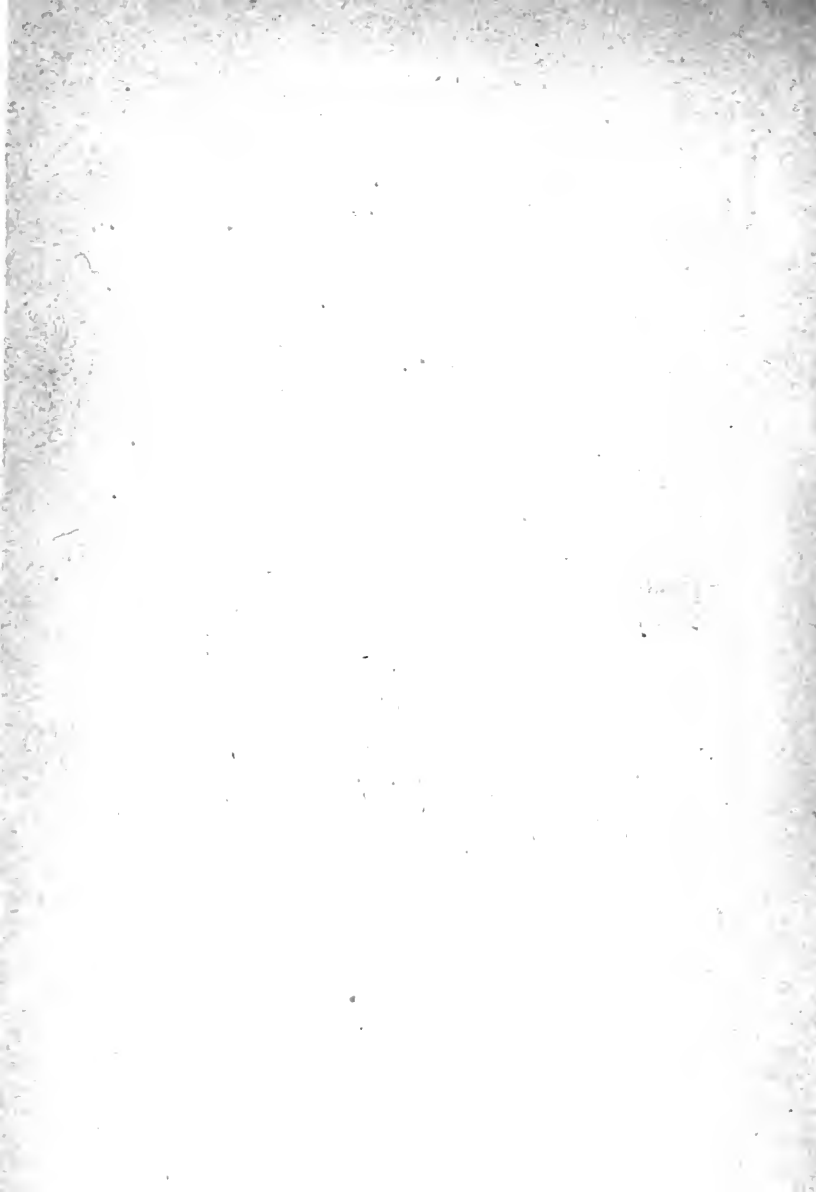
"About the same, but a little out of his head some of the time, I should think," said Arthur.

"Did you give him the medicine just as I told you?"

"Yes; when I could get him to take it. The



THE DOCTOR LAID HIS BROAD HAND ON THE BOY'S SHOULDER. Page 203.



last time he didn't seem to know me, and as I expected you so soon, I didn't try to make him drink it."

"That's right, my boy!"

On going away again the doctor said,—

"You make a pretty good nurse, but this case is too much for a boy like you; I must see that you have help. By the way, you ought to know there's some danger of your taking the fever yourself if you stay here."

"Is there?" Arthur asked, looking up anxiously at the doctor.

"I think so," replied the doctor, looking down gravely at the boy, and watching the effect of his words.

Arthur was silent for a moment; his eyes fell and his lips twitched. Then he said, "I don't believe I shall be sick for a few days. Anyway, I shall stay as long as he needs me."

The doctor laid his hand kindly on the boy's shoulder. "You're a little hero!" he said with a smile.

At first Arthur hardly understood the words. Then, as he watched the buggy driving up the road, they seemed a sort of mockery to him in his humility. His idea of a hero had been something

so very different ! Something finely defiant, with a tinge of wild romance.

He had given up that. But it had never yet occurred to him that to do one's simple duty amidst disagreeable circumstances, bearing up resolutely against distress and danger, was the true heroism, after all.

"I'm such a fool and coward !" he said to himself, thinking how badly he and Stub had acted at the time of the steamboat accident. "I've no courage, not a bit !"

He did not reflect that it required a higher courage than that of the *Left-Handed Luke* and *Sol Slasher* sort to stay there and nurse the friendless fisherman in the face of a contagious and often fatal disease.

While Arthur sat in the cabin door thinking, with his head down, he heard a step on the wharf, and looking up saw a young fellow named Charley, who had charge of boats belonging to the hotel. He had come to ask about Job.

Arthur was glad to see anybody who felt the least interest in his friend, or would give him a word of encouragement and sympathy.

"His business troubles him," he said, walking to the edge of the wharf with Charley. "I attend

to it as well as I can; but, of course, I can't do much. I would go out and take the fish off the trawl-hooks, if I could get anybody to stay with him while I'm gone."

"Perhaps *I* can stay with him," said Charley, "by-and-by. I'll see. There's a couple of ladies waiting for me now."

He hurried down to the sandy river-bank, where his boats were hauled up. One of these he launched, and taking the ladies aboard, pulled across with them to the opposite shore; while Arthur stood gazing. He had recognized one of the ladies as she stepped into the boat. It was his Good Angel. But she did not know him, she would never know him again!

He was almost jealous of Charley rowing her across the stream, sitting face to face with her, and helping her out of the boat on the opposite bank. She disappeared with her companion over the low sand-hills, and Charley returned with the empty boat.

"They've gone to walk on the long beach," he called up to Arthur from the shore below. "I've got to wait and bring them back. After that I'll take your place, if nothing else hinders."

Arthur waited, within and without the cabin,

until the end of about an hour ; while he was giving Job his medicine, he again heard footsteps on the wharf.

He went out as soon as he could, expecting to see Charley ; but met instead a well-remembered face, the sight of which filled him with astonishment.

It was a rather sallow young face, with a little feeble beard on the upper lip ; and it beamed upon Arthur with a smile which called up no very pleasant recollections.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

## ROWING TO THE TRAWL.

WHAT are you going to do with that dory?" Arthur demanded; for the proprietor of the face was coolly undoing the painter.

"I'm going to use it a minute; why not?"

"Because I have charge of that dory!" exclaimed Arthur. "And anything I have to do with shall never be trusted in *your* hands, if I can help it!"

"Hallo!" the youth suddenly exclaimed, looking more closely at Arthur. "I thought I had seen you somewhere? My young friend, how do you do!"



He reached out his hand. Arthur regarded it with angry scorn.

"Why, what's the matter?" said the youth, feigning surprise. "You seem to have a prejudice against your old acquaintance."

"A prejudice?" cried Arthur; "after being humbugged and cheated as I was by you! That's cool!"

"Humbugged? Cheated? There's some misunderstanding," said the young man. "Perhaps I colored the picture a little; that's my way; slightly romantic, you know. But here's the yacht I told you about, or if it isn't a yacht, it's a sail-boat, the identical *Jolly Rover*, — moored in the cove. I just want the dory to go out to her. I'm going to take a sail. Go with me, won't you? And we'll have a taste of the good time we talked about."

"Go with you?" Arthur exclaimed indignantly. "No, Lewis Thomas, — Dick Dorr, — whatever you call yourself to-day! And *you* shan't go, if I can help it."

"You forget two things," replied the rogue. "One is, that both the yacht and the dory belong to my father. The other is, that I am stronger than you."

With these words he gave Arthur a push, and, throwing the painter, leaped down after it into the dory.

Finding that he could not help himself, and knowing that any appeal to Job on his sick-bed would be worse than useless, Arthur stood on the wharf and watched, while Dick Dorr took possession of the *Jolly Rover*.

"Won't you bring back the dory?" Arthur asked, seeing that he was about to leave it moored in place of the sail-boat.

"I think I may as well leave it here till I come back; it won't be long," Dick replied, as he hauled the sheet and took his seat at the helm.

Wind and tide were favorable to going out; and the *Jolly Rover* floated swiftly past the wharf and down the stream. Dick Dorr waved his hat mockingly at Arthur on the pier; and was soon tossing, with bellying sail and careening hull, on the swells of the open sea.

Arthur had been so intently occupied in watching him, that he did not at first observe the two ladies returning over the sand-hills. Charley rowed across and brought them over; and afterwards pulled up against the tide, past the wharf, and got the dory for Arthur.

"I'm sorry I couldn't come any sooner," he said, as he landed at the pier. "But I can stay with Job now."

"You've come at just the right time," Arthur said, drawing the dory alongside the wharf. "I can go out to the trawl and get back by the turning of the tide, or shortly after."

He had everything ready for the start. He gave Charley directions about the care of the sick man, and cautioned him against remaining too much in the hut, since the disease was said to be contagious.

"He doesn't need any more medicine till the doctor comes. The main thing is to stay by him, and see that he doesn't get away, or do himself an injury when he's out of his head."

Then, as he stepped down the ladder into the dory, Arthur asked, —

"Who are those ladies you took across the creek; do you know?"

"I don't know the name of the younger one; only they call her Eliz'beth," replied Charley. "She calls the older one aunt; sometimes Aunt Marcia, and sometimes Aunt Talcott."

Arthur had not forgotten that Luther Talcott was the name of the uncle whom he had seen on

the steamboat—the owner of *Lewis Thomas's* trunk.

“What do you want to know for?” Charley inquired.

“Oh, nothing—only——

Arthur was minded to say that he had seen “Eliz’beth” before, and to entrust Charley with some message to her, to deliver when he should chance to meet her again.

But how should he shape the message? What word could he send, without seeming to presume too much upon her kindness towards a boy who was after all nothing to her, and whom she had probably quite forgotten?

While he was hesitating, Charley, standing with one foot on the wharf-ladder, gave the dory a push with the other, thinking Arthur needed that little help.

“Thank you, Charley!” said Arthur, as he floated off on the eddy; and so postponed sending the message until some fitter time—a time which was never to come.

The wind was light, the sea was not rough, and practice had given the boy considerable strength and skill at the oars. Once out of the creek and past the roaring bar, he got his bearings, and pulled steadily and boldly out to sea.

Weary of his long watch with Job, he was glad of this relief. There was also something inspiring in the circumstance that he was making his first trip to the trawl alone.

He watched the shore receding fast ; and glancing now and then over his shoulder, his eye also observed a sail half a mile off, illumined by the afternoon sun.

"It's the *Jolly Rover*," he said, with a bitter feeling, as he thought of young Dorr's flying away in that reckless fashion, in spite of all he could do to hinder him. "If he had been any sort of a decent fellow, I would have asked him to take me in tow. He is going right by the trawl."



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## A LINE FROM THE JOLLY ROVER.

SUDDENLY the sail darkened. A strange-looking, hairy cloud was passing across the sun. It spread fast up the sky and a gloom fell upon the sea.

At the same time the wind freshened. It was partly in Arthur's favor now. But if it did not change, it would be on his port bow in rowing back. He did not like to think of that.

"I must work!" he said.

He had already taken off his coat. He now threw his hat down with it in the bottom of the skiff. With his head bare in the wild light, his locks blown by the wind, the dory rising and falling on the swells, he kept his outward course.

His anxious eyes were rejoiced when they discovered the floats that buoyed the trawl. Pulling to the nearest, he set to work with a will; and seldom had fish from those lines come faster into the dory, even with Job himself to handle them.

Owing to Buckhorn's sickness, Arthur had not thought it best to bait fish-hooks. He took on board the trawl itself, as fast as the fish were removed; and towards the last, threw fish and lines together into the tub.

By the time he had unfastened the main line from the anchored block that kept that end from drifting away, he was pretty thoroughly wet, not alone from the hurried way in which he had done the job, but more from the plashing of the chop seas which had begun to throw their spray into the boat.

Then for the homeward pull!

The wind had all the while been increasing, and the shadow on the sea had deepened to an ominous gloom. The heavy swells were still running shoreward, but nearly at right angles across them ran the angry chop sea, lashed by the wind. This, to an inexperienced boy like Arthur, made rowing difficult; and it soon became dangerous.

To keep the mastery of the oars amid such irregular, wrenching waves was not easy. Sometimes he missed a stroke, and sometimes a billow would seem to take the oar in its jaws and almost jerk it from his grasp.

The wind was all the time blowing him off his



course. And now and then would come a wave with a sudden furious slap, sending a salt shower completely over the skiff.

Across the white caps that rolled between him and the shore, the distant rocks grew dim, and a stormy mist wrapped the hotel.

He had been out on as wild a water once before, but then it was with Job. It was a different thing to battle alone with the sea and gale. He was alarmed, but he did not lose his wits.

"I must head more and more to the wind!"

This was necessary, not only to counteract the tendency to drift, but also to bring his bow more directly across the waves.

But now he seemed to be making but very little progress; and it was plain that, if the gale continued to increase while his strength diminished, he would soon make none at all.

He did not think of himself alone. "Who will take care of Job," he thought, "if I don't get back by the time Charley goes to his supper?"

His eyes wandered wistfully away towards a long point of land stretching out to the eastward, forming a goodly reach of lee shore. As a last resort, he might turn and row before the wind, beach his dory there in a little cove he knew, and hurry home on foot.

He was seriously contemplating this course, when, from the opposite direction, a bounding prow came rushing toward him over the white-capped waves.

It was the *Jolly Rover*, which he had lost sight of and quite forgotten in the excitement of the past few minutes.

"If that rascal would only take my painter!" thought he. "But he is only running near to laugh at me."

He might even have suspected an intention to run him down, but for the danger to the yacht itself from any such foolhardy trick as that.

The *Jolly Rover* was assuredly coming aboard of him if it did not luff and cross his bow, or fall off and pass astern.

"Perhaps he don't see me!"

Arthur gave a shout, and saw immediately an alert face peeping at him between the low-running gunwale and the sail. A moment later the *Jolly Rover* came to the wind and shot alongside the dory.

He shipped his oars and was about to reach for his painter, in order to throw it, when he perceived a line shaken in the helmsman's hand.

There was a moment of confusion as the madly

flapping sail and swinging boom passed over ; then the coils of line flew out and fell across the dory.

It tightened in Arthur's hand almost as soon as he seized it ; and it was well for him, if he wished to hold on, that the sail-boat had slackened speed in coming into the wind. He had made it fast to



his own painter-ring by the time the *Jolly Rover* moved off on the other tack.

"Come aboard !" Dick Dorr called to him from the helm.

"I will, if I can get aboard," Arthur shouted back.

The yacht was kept well in the wind, while he hauled on the line, until his bow almost touched the *Jolly Rover's* name over the rudder. Dorr made room for him and he jumped aboard.

"Well!" Dick laughed, "what do you think now? I'm a pretty good fellow after all, ain't I?"

Arthur had put on his coat after shipping the trawl, but his hat, which was of straw and carried too much sail for such a wind, he had left in the dory. He was tying his handkerchief over his head as he replied, —

"I'm much obliged to you for giving me a lift. But the *Jolly Rover* owed me a good turn."

"How so?" said Dick.

"You know," replied Arthur, "it's you and your *Jolly Rover* that got me into a scrape and gave me all the trouble I've had since you left us in the rascally way you did on the steamboat!"

He was so indignant whenever he thought of that exasperating circumstance, that he couldn't forbear speaking his mind frankly about it even now.

Dick grinned wickedly while he protested his innocence of any evil intention.

"I don't wonder you thought strange of my sudden disappearance," he said. "And I don't

suppose you will believe me when I declare that I just stepped ashore to speak to a man and so missed the boat, which moved off from the wharf before I could jump aboard."

"Believe you!" Arthur exclaimed. "Of course I don't! You would have called out and we should have seen you on the wharf, if you hadn't been already out of sight when the steamer started."

"I acknowledge, appearances seem to be against me," laughed the rogue.

"And your trunk marked with your initials, *L. T!*" said Arthur. "How about that?"

"I've never heard of it since," replied the merry rascal.

"I've no doubt but you are telling the truth now, if never before," Arthur said. "We found the owner of that trunk on board the steamboat, and his name wasn't *Lewis Thomas*, but *Luther Talcott* — an honest man and no scamp!"

"That's what I call a pretty good joke! You ought to view the whole thing in that light," Dick said, "and be jolly over it."

"A joke!" said Arthur. "How could you have a conscience to fleece green boys in that way?"

"How could I help it?" laughed Dick. "You were so green! Or rather, so ripe! It was like a

ripe peach falling into a fellow's mouth. I was out of money ——”

“You had no twenty-dollar bill? I thought so.”

“I hadn't twenty cents! But honest, I had no idea at first of getting into you as deep as I did. I just hoped to get a dinner out of you. I tried to shake you off after a while; but you stuck to me so, I *had* to invent that little steamboat trick, which I flatter myself was extremely neat and original. Now wasn't it?”

Dick grinned in the face of Arthur, whose features did not relax as he replied:—

“It was extremely wicked! I don't think taking in a couple of ninnies like us was anything to brag of. You'd better see what you're about!”

The boat was running over on her side in a manner that appeared to him dangerous.

“Don't be uneasy,” said Dick, hauling a little closer to the wind. “I've sailed this craft when she has gone over so that you almost had to get out of her and sit on her keel. Really!” he added, looking sharply ahead, “I never expected I should some day actually give you a sail in the *Jolly Rover*! It's an unexpected pleasure. You ought to excuse everything now I'm towing you into port.”

"Towing *me*?" cried Arthur. "This is your father's dory, you say. I was attending to his business as well as to Buckhorn's. It belongs to you to help about that, if you can."

"That's so," young Dorr admitted. "That's what I've come down to the port for. I heard the old man was sick, and I thought his interests—as well as my own—might need looking after."

"It's a pretty way to look after them! You never went near his sick partner, nor asked about the business, but took the yacht and put off for a sail!"

"I was so glad to find the old gent better that I had to give vent to my joy in some such fashion. Though the truth is," Dick added, after a moment's reflection, "my dad didn't give me a very cordial welcome, and I didn't know just what to do with myself for a couple of hours. So I came for a trip in the *Jolly Rover*. Though if I'd guessed it was going to blow like this, you wouldn't have caught me——"

He was interrupted by a terrific blast which bore the boat over on her beam-ends. Arthur, bracing his feet, stood up almost straight in the endeavor to keep his seat on the windward side, while the wave rushed over her rail.

Dick brought the boat to the wind, however, before a very large quantity of water was shipped. The smile had suddenly faded from his face, which looked more sallow than ever with the only sincere expression Arthur had yet seen there; that of alarm.



## CHAPTER XXIX.

## RUNNING BEFORE THE GALE.

WITH furiously flapping sail, the yacht, losing its headway, immediately drifted astern, bumping the dory in tow; then, taking the blast on the other side, went over on her starboard beams with a frightful roll.

As it was impossible to bring her at once to the wind, there was no other way than to pay out the sheet and let the sail fly.

But even this simple operation was near ending in disaster. The boat careened so that the boom, instead of swinging free, struck the water, and thus caught, held the sail to the wind.

Had she been going forward, she must instantly have capsized. As it was, she took in a good barrel-full of brine before the rapid movement astern relieved the boom, and she partially righted.

Then something astonishing took place. Dick had sailed the *Jolly Rover* many times with hitherto the most perfect confidence in his ability

to manage her in all weathers. But he had never been out in her in such a tempest, nor known her to behave in like fashion.

Losing command of her, he at the same time lost his self-possession and his grip of the sheet. Out it flew through the pulley, as the boat swung round with the wind. The sail, blown violently before, carried the boom straight forward like an enormous bowsprit; from the end of which the sheet, escaping quite from the stern, streamed in the gale, writhing and whipping the sea like a snake.

Dick gave a terrified exclamation, scarcely audible in the smiting hurricane.

Arthur had not yet spoken a word. But when he saw the boat, like some frantic thing of life, throwing off all control and flying before the blast, while Dick seemed powerless, paralyzed with fear, it can hardly be said that he was not afraid.

"Down sail, why don't you? Down sail!" he cried.

"I can't furl it! Better let it flap!" said Dick.

"Can't you bring her to the wind?"

"Not in this tornado!"

"The dory has filled!" exclaimed Arthur.

"Cut it adrift!" shouted Dick.

"Oh no ; what's the use?"

Arthur could not bear to think of losing the boat, for whose safety he felt himself responsible. But in spite of his remonstrance, Dick slashed the line with his knife ; it parted and the dory fell astern, keeling over in the foaming billows.

"Oh ! now don't you see?" cried Arthur. "We are going faster ! we're driving right on that rocky point !"

The foundered dory had in fact acted as a drag ; which being cast off, the yacht seemed fairly to fly through the water, heading towards the storm-lashed rocks.

"I can steer clear !" said Dick. "With that foundered dory in tow I couldn't steer at all."

The boat obeyed the helm. But so furious now was the squall that to veer much from its direct course was attended with great danger. It seemed only waiting to catch the yacht's side but slightly exposed, in order to overwhelm her in the bubbles and foam.

Once that evil chance seemed to have come. Again the long swinging boom struck a wave. Held by it but for a moment the sail partly filled. Down went the gunwale and in washed the sea.

But almost immediately the falling of the wave

relieved the boom. At the same time Dick brought the stern more direct to the wind. The boat righted, with another barrel-full of water; and flew on her course.

"That was a narrow escape!" said Arthur.

"Yes! But I shall clear the rocks!" Dick answered.

A minute later they were shooting by a weltering chaos, where the tempest was screaming and the white water leaping over a reef.

They had passed the point; leaving on their left a wild shore of ledges and cliffs along which raged the sea.

"We should have gone to flinders, if we had struck there," said Dick. "It would have been the last of the *Jolly Rover*, and of us, too!"

"We may strike yet," said Arthur.

They had to yell these words, as near as they were to each other, in order to make them heard above the awful uproar.

The point was in fact but one of several such which broke a long reach of seaward stretching coast. Even if these should all be safely passed, the long arm of the cape would still be before them, five or six miles away.

Perhaps the force of the gale would abate before

they had run so far. But there was small prospect of that. It was blowing as Arthur had never before imagined that wind could blow.

The hotel was lost to sight, hidden by the storm, even before the rocks intervened. Rain had come with the tempest; if that could be called rain which did not seem to fall, but drove in mad gusts horizontally across the sea, mixed with spray from the waves.

Arthur's hat had been lost in the dory. And now, while he was trying to bale some of the water out of the sail-boat, the handkerchief blew from his head, and went flying away like a bird over the sea.

The cape was shrouded in mist. But Dick, as well as Arthur, knew that it was there, lying across their course, however well he might steer.

"What will become of us?" said Arthur, clinging and bracing himself.

He thought of Job lying sick, of his folks at home, and of his letter, which he was now glad indeed that he had written.

What Dick Dorr was thinking of could not be guessed. He had recovered from his first fright, and was keeping a sharp lookout to avoid danger behind and destruction ahead.

"The only way is to run into some cove," he said. "Brant Inlet—I might make that, if I could see the coast and know where we are."

"Try for it!" cried Arthur.

"If I had a hatchet, you would see that mast go by the board, sail and all," said Dick, after they had been running for some time by outlying ledges and boulders, over and among which the sea seethed and hissed.

"Can't we cut loose the sail?" Arthur asked.

"I've thought of that. Can you steer?"

Arthur believed he could. He took the helm, and watched with trepidation, while the yacht plunged forward in the blinding rain and spray.

Clinging hold of whatever he could grasp, Dick groped over the wet and slippery deck until he reached the mast-foot. Holding tight to that, to keep himself from blowing away, he once more opened his knife, and began cutting away the grommets which bound the sail to the mast-rings.

As fast as he cut them, he hauled down the sail, which the mighty strain of the wind upon it partly sustained on the raking mast, even after the hal-yards were loosed. Suddenly down swooped the buffeting canvas about the boom, flapping into

wings, puffing into bags and balloons that instantly collapsed, and all the time carrying the boat forward faster than ever.

These were exciting moments to Arthur, who watched the operation, hoping success, but fearing disaster, and steering as best he could under the circumstances.

The gaff was at last cut away ; and the great canvas, rising and opening, swept forward over the boom, till near the end, where it was held by the fastening of the sheet. There it stayed, whirling aloft and about, and thrashing the sea in terrific fashion.

The jib, which all along had remained closely furled, was whipping loose ; and the boom, supported now only by the high bow on which it rested, when it rested at all, began to beat and bump and plunge, and drag in the water as much of the sail as was not blown out by the wind.

Dick was struggling to cast loose the boom from its fastening at the mast, and at the same time looking out for landmarks, when he perceived that they were driving past a low island which, as he remembered, lay at the mouth of the inlet. They must steer for this instantly, if at all.

He shouted and gesticulated at Arthur. But

either Arthur could not understand his orders, or the situation of the sail made steering more impracticable than ever.

With a yell of impatience, Dick scrambled back to the helm, which Arthur was glad enough to give up to him again.

"Couldn't you get rid of the boom?" cried Arthur.

"I could if you could steer!" Dick answered.

"Give me your knife!" said Arthur.

It was now his turn to creep forward to the mast. But he had barely reached it, when he shrieked out, —

"Breakers ahead! breakers ahead!"



## CHAPTER XXX.

## THE WRECK.

THEY had already swept across the entrance to the inlet ; and Dick, unable to guide the boat into it, was heading towards a low, surf-deluged ledge.

He put his helm quickly about, and Arthur hoped that that danger might be escaped. But just as they were passing the sea-tearing, rocky tusk, the wave that was carrying them over the sunken end of it sucked away, and with a tremendous thump the *Jolly Rover* struck.

She was immediately thrown over on her side, and Arthur, instinctively, to avoid rolling under her, gave a headlong leap, striking the ledge on all fours, while it was for a moment black and slippery and bare.

He scrambled for life over the barnacles that encrusted the ledge above, wounding his hands on those toothed and fanged excrescences ; but was caught half-way by the next wave, deluged, hoisted and hurled still farther up the rough ledge.

Then came the heavy, horrible downward suck, when for a moment he felt himself drawn inevitably back into a yawning gulf.

But he clung as well as he could, regardless of the hurts to his torn hands and knees. The overweighting water fell away from him, sliding faster than he; and after a brief pause, dripping, struggling, he crawled upwards, beyond the reach of the surf.

Then he looked back for the yacht, and saw that the wave which lifted him had swept her from the ledge, and borne her on, capsized and half-submerged.

Where was Dick?

Arthur was on his feet in a moment, clambering over the steep rocks beyond, in the fierce wind and rain, to get, if possible, a sight of his companion swimming in that troubled sea, or drifting with the wreck.

Not far along he came to a little cove, or rather chasm, among the rocks, which enclosed it with precipitous broken sides. Into that the overwhelmed boat was floating, with her keel turned to the tempest, and something like a human face appearing and disappearing as the waves broke over her quarter.

In that time of danger Arthur had forgotten whatever cause he might have to feel enmity towards Dick and to wish him ill. He forgot his own bleeding hands also. His only thought now was to see Dorr also get safely ashore.

He looked down into the misty chasm; where, amidst the turmoil of the sea and gale, he could hear the rushing and grinding of pebbles with every receding wave.

Below was a little beach, not more than three or four yards in extent, left partly exposed by the ebb-tide. Towards this the wreck was drifting. It soon struck, and the face Arthur had seen emerged from the back-running billows, followed by the arms and shoulders of a man.

It was Dick; safe perhaps for some minutes, though every returning wave nearly took him off his feet, and drove him under the rocky wall, which was there hollowed into a sort of cavern by the action of the sea.

Beyond this pebbly beach, on each side, the water was deep, and the precipitous rocks were swept by the powerful waves. How, then, was Dick to get out?

The tide must soon turn, if it had not turned already. The wind was blowing up the waves. A

few feet more of water would leave him no resource whatever but to swim; and of what avail would that be in such a sea?

The wreck was rather a source of danger than otherwise. It lodged in the chasm, where the waves broke over it, dashing it up and down, pounding the stern against the rocks, and heaving it nearer and nearer to Dick, who was saved from its blows only by some part of the mast or boom which held it off.

By shouts Arthur made his presence known to his companion below; and groped his way down the broken side of the rocks until he was not more than ten feet above him. But he tried in vain to find a place where he could get down low enough to reach him a hand.

A rope! if he only had a rope!

There was the sail rolling in the waves; and some portion of the cordage must be near.

He shouted and pointed; and when Dick looked up, made a motion as of hauling a line.

Dick understood; and just then caught sight of a part of a halyard running back with the last wave that washed the loud pebbles. He sprang and seized it; and presently held a dripping coil ready to fling.



DICK CLIMBED SLOWLY AND PAINFULLY OUT OF THE CHASM.



## CHAPTER XXXI.

## THE RETURN BY LAND.

A MINUTE later, Arthur, who had caught the line and taken a turn with it around an angle of the rock above, was holding fast; while Dick climbed slowly and painfully out of the chasm, using knees and feet against the ledge, and knotting and winding wrists and elbows with the cord.

Luckily, after some slips, but none fatal, he reached a safe foothold and scrambled up to Arthur.

"You're a lovely boy!" he said, with scant breath. "I never could have got out of that without help!"

Arthur let go the line, which he had faithfully held, not without anguish to his cut hands.

"We are all right now!" added Dick.

"The *Jolly Rover* is done for!" exclaimed Arthur.

"Who cares for the *Jolly Rover*?"

"And we have lost the dory!"

Arthur still felt personally responsible for that.

"Hang the dory!" cried Dick. "We've saved ourselves, and that's enough. Now let it blow!"

"Are there any houses near?" Arthur asked.

"I don't know; I never was on this spot before, and I hope never to be again."

"I'd like to borrow a hat somewhere and find out the nearest way back," said Arthur. "I've no time to lose."

"Time! what do you mean?" Dick demanded, as they climbed over the storm-swept rocks.

"I must get back to Job," said Arthur. "There's nobody to take care of him."

"Job be blowed!" said Dick. "We must take care of ourselves."

"Charley's going home by this time," said Arthur. "It won't do to leave Buckhorn alone."

"You're a fool to think of him now, or of anybody but yourself!"

To this Arthur answered, quietly, "I thought of you."

Dorr gave a forced laugh. "That was all right," he said. "I owe you some money, you know; you would never have got it if I had drowned."

"I didn't expect to see that again whether you drowned or not," said Arthur. "I am going by the coast."



"But you can't go by the coast! There's the inlet."

Arthur had not thought of that. He had not really seen it, and did not know that it had been passed.

But there it was, opening and broadening before him, as, in spite of Dorr, he faced the storm in that direction, knowing no other way back to Longcliff and the creek.

"How far inland does it run?" he asked, returning dismayed to his companion.

"I don't know; four or five miles, I believe," replied Dick.

"It doesn't look very deep, now the tide is out."

"It's too deep to wade and too broad to swim."

"It is almost night," said Arthur. "I *must* get back."

The gloom of the storm was indeed fast deepening into darkness. The squall was about over, but it was raining harder than ever. There was promise of a dismal night.

In his glee over their escape, Dick was inclined to laugh at their adventure, caring little for the *Jolly Rover*, the dory, or the sick man waiting for Arthur in the lonely hut. But his companion was silent and anxious.

After keeping along the shore of the inlet for about half a mile, they saw a farm-house not far off, with a comforting gleam of warm light in its windows. Hurrying to the door they were admitted by a tall girl, who looked astonished at their drenched garments and hatless heads, and heard Dick's abrupt declaration that they had been cast ashore.

"O ma! ma!" she called, "here are two sailors that have been shipwrecked!"

The mother came, and other children, boys and girls, crowded around the wet strangers, who were received with eager sympathy and made welcome at the kitchen fire.

"You'll soon get dry," said the mother, stuffing more wood into the stove. "We shall have supper ready before long. Won't you take some whiskey?"

There seemed to be nothing she would not gladly have done for her guests. Dick accepted the offer of whiskey, and prepared to make himself comfortable for the night. But Arthur said, "How far is it to Longeliff?"

"Across the coast," replied the woman, "we call it about three miles. Around by the road it's five or six."

"How can I go by the coast?"

"If my husband was here to set you over the inlet in his boat, — but even then you couldn't find your way in the night! You don't think of going *now*?" asked the woman, with a look of surprise and motherly pity.

"I must!" said Arthur, in much agitation. "There's a sick man waiting for me there. And I must start now, if it is so far!"

"Why not wait till you get dry and warm?"

"The rain would wet me again. And running will keep me warm."

"Won't you have some supper?"

"I haven't time. Besides, I'm not hungry."

"Can't we do *anything* for you?" the kind woman asked, while the children stood round and stared.

"If you could lend me a cap, — though that's of little consequence."

"Why, yes! I can get you a cap that you may have, if you can keep it on your head."

She brought a cap and gave it to Arthur. "It belonged to my oldest boy," she said; "but he's away from home now and will never wear it again."

"It's just the thing!" said Arthur. "You will

stay?" he asked of Dick, now settled in the corner awaiting some whiskey and hot water which the tall girl was preparing.

"That's exactly what I shall do," replied that cheerful adventurer. "Not all the sick men in all the cabins on the coast, if they were my own fathers, could tempt me out just now. I have too high an appreciation of such hospitality."

"I appreciate the hospitality," said Arthur. "But I must go!"

He wished to give the woman some hint of the dishonest character of her remaining guest, but did not know how to put it into words. So, after inquiring his way at the door, he thanked her, cast one regretful look back at the warm room he was leaving, and hurried forth to try an unknown road in a rainy night.

He got on very well for a while, crossing the inlet by a bridge a mile farther up. But beyond that his way was beset by discouragements which would have proved terrible even to an older and much braver boy.

The night had now fairly shut down. The way was rough and it soon entered a forest of pines, which grew blackly on both sides, and blotted out what little was left of the dull twilight. The wind

roared drearily, like another sea, through the reeling tops. Rain ! rain ! rain !

Only the faintest glimmer between the two walls of trees showed him his way. He could not see the ground, but often went stumbling over rocks by the roadside, or slipping in the mud ; and once he fell into a ditch.

He was often tempted to turn back ; splashed, bruised, appalled by the darkness and storm, it seemed to him that he could not go on.

Then he would think of Job, sick in his hut ; Job, who had been so good a friend to him ; who, in his delirium, might rush out in the rain, or fall from the wharf and drown, because *he* was not there to save him ; and again he would struggle forward.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## JOB'S PARTNER.

IT was ten o'clock and bright starlight, — the storm was over and the wind had gone down, — when, at last, weary, anxious, faint for want of food, still wet with sea-water and rain, and streaked with mire, Arthur came in sight of the many shining windows of the Longcliff Hotel.

The sight cheered him; he knew now where he was. Job — if nothing had happened to him yet — Job was close by, down there, in the hut on the wharf by the darkly-gleaming creek.

A glimmer of rays, warmer and more diffused than the starlight reflected in the still water, encouraged him still more. There was a lantern burning in the hut and the door was open.

Arthur, with his heart full almost to bursting of what he had suffered and what he had feared, ran down to the wharf and looked eagerly in at the door.

There was the lantern on the floor; there were

the barrels supporting the board for a table, the old stove, the scanty crockery, the bunks framed against the wall; all silent in the sallow light. But the bunks were empty. The hut was empty. Job was gone.

"Job!" called Arthur, in a loud voice.

No answer; the very silence frightened him.

"He has got away! He may have walked off the wharf! Where is he? where *is* he?"

The wretched boy clasped tight his wounded hands, regardless of pain; and haggard, splashed, panic-stricken, standing there in the vacant hut staring around him, began to cry with the excess of terror and grief.

All his efforts to get back there to the bedside of his friend had been in vain. He had come too late!

But tears were of no use. There was the lantern—oh, if he had only had it in those dark woods! he might have been here an hour sooner, at least. But it might serve him still in tracing and perhaps finding Job.

Just as he was taking it up, he heard footsteps on the wharf, approaching the hut.

"Oh, if that is he!" exclaimed the boy, with an inward prayer.

He turned to look out ; and met, coming to the door, not Job, nor anybody he had ever seen, but a short, dark man, with a face that looked strangely sallow and sinister in the lantern-light.

"What do you want here?" the stranger demanded, in a gruff voice — for all the world as if he belonged there and Arthur were the intruder.

"Where's Job? Mr. Buckhorn?" Arthur asked.

"Where he'll be a good deal better off than he was here," the man replied.

"Is he taken care of?" cried Arthur, with new hope.

"Of course. He'd have died here. The doctor had him sent for this afternoon. Hotel folks helped him off, for fear he would help their boarders off. Afraid of the fever. Did you want him?"

Arthur was so absorbingly interested in hearing this account of his friend that it was some time before he thought to give an account of himself.

"I am the boy that works for him," he said at length.

"I might have known as much!" growled the man. "Where's my dory?"

"Your dory?"

Arthur sat down on a stool, giving way at last



to a reaction which followed the long strain upon mind and body.

"My dory!" repeated the man, grimly. "You had it this afternoon."

A new light broke upon the boy's understanding. "You are Job's partner?" he asked. "You are Mr. Dorr?"

"That's my name. I'll bet a thousand dollars you got blowed ashore, and the dory got stove!"

Arthur did not feel like entering into explanations. He merely said, in answer to the man's angry speech, —

"We lost the dory, and the *Jolly Rover*, too."

"The *Jolly Rover*, too!" exclaimed Job's partner, with a compressed fury in his emphasis. Then with an oath, — "I hope that rascally son of mine went with her!"

"He did," said Arthur, not quite understanding the significance of this terrible wish.

"Drowned, is he?" said the man with stern emotion. "That's better than having him run off with the boat and sell her, as I expected he would. I wish he'd been drowned five years ago!"

"But he isn't drowned," replied Arthur. "He's

in a house on the other side of Brant Inlet, where we went after we got out of the water."

"He has the luck!" was the wrathful father's comment. "And where's the sail-boat?"

"We left her bumping the rocks in a little cove just beyond the inlet."

"You was with him, then?"

"He picked me up at sea, as I was trying to pull home in the dory against the wind."

"What does a land-lubber like you know about a dory?" broke forth the senior Dorr, after glaring a moment upon Arthur in angry silence. "You had no business in it. A sail-boat and a dory, both the same day!"

He ground his teeth over this double loss.

"I tried to do what was for the best," said Arthur, down-hearted enough at this return for all his toils and sufferings.

"Tried to do. You baby!" roared Job's partner (so unlike Job himself), seeing him begin to cry. "Come out of here!"

"Can't I stay here to night?" pleaded the boy.

"Stay here? No! I don't want you to get the fever, if you *have* lost a dory for me; and you'll get it sure as fate if you stay."

"I don't care much, if I do get it," said Arthur.

"I care! I don't want you to be sick on my hands. Out of here, I tell ye! I'm going to shut up. No use of waiting, now I know the *Jolly Rover* is lost. I paid three hundred dollars for that boat!" And the elder Dorr ended with a string of angry oaths.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## TURNED OUT.

ORDERED out in that abrupt fashion, Arthur supposed he must of course obey. He picked up the few things of his which had been left out of his bag, stuffed them into it, put on his hat — the one he had left home in — and stepped out on the wharf.

Where should he go?

He remembered that he had a few cents in his pocket, and that Job — that is, the partners, Dorr and Buckhorn — owed him at least five dollars. But could he ask this lurid-souled, unjust man for his wages? Not while he remembered that he had lost the dory, worth so much more than all he had earned.

He took his bag and wandered hopelessly and aimlessly from the wharf. The hut — his only home, poor as it was — shut against him; his one friend gone; the lonely world and gloomy night once more surrounding him; he bitterly regretted

for a moment that he had not remained in the farm-house with the easy-conscienced Dick.

Only the hotel showed him its inviting windows ; and, hardly knowing what he did, he wearily climbed the slope.

He had no definite idea of getting lodgings there for the night—he, the penniless and besplashed fisher-boy ! But his mind had turned again, in his disconsolate state, to his Good Angel ; towards whom his very feet seemed drawn by an irresistible attraction.

“I will ask to see her,” he said to himself. “I will tell her what has happened to me since I saw her—that I have written to my mother—and ask her what I had better do.”

It seemed to him that good counsel and help must come to him from that source, unworthy as he was.

But when he entered the great hotel hall, amidst well-dressed gentlemen chatting and smoking at their ease, and approached the desk behind which the indifferent clerk was sitting—the clerk who knew him only as the fisherman’s errand-boy ; and when he felt curious eyes turned upon him, as he stood there, miserable, tattered, begrimed, in the brilliant light, his heart failed him ; and only the

thought of his desperate and friendless condition prevented him from turning back.

Forcing himself to walk up to the desk, he said, tremblingly, to the clerk, —

“There’s a lady here I wish to see.”

“What name?”

“She is with Mrs. Talcott. She is her niece. They call her Elizabeth.”

To which the clerk replied in a brief, business-like way, without stirring from his chair, —

“Mrs. Talcott and her niece left here by the five o’clock coach this afternoon.”

Arthur was almost stunned for a moment by this news. And yet it was somehow a relief to know that he was not to appear in his present plight before the eyes of his Good Angel.

He did not think to ask where she had gone. Ten, or a hundred miles away, what difference could it make to him?

He came to her when it was too late; when the opportunity which had hovered about him, and which he had neglected so long, was suddenly snatched away.

He turned to go; then stopped, bewildered and undecided, and looked again at the clerk. He wanted to ask, “Will you keep me over night?”



But for a dirty little fellow like him to apply there for lodging which he could not pay for, seemed too absurd. And without another syllable he walked miserably out of the door.

Having quitted the light and gossip of the hotel, —that home of everybody having money and wearing good clothes, — he stood in the open air.

The calm stars were shining, and the roar of the breakers on the bar came loudly to his ear.

How many nights he had lain in Buckhorn's hut and listened to that sound ! He had learned to love it, although it had become associated in his mind with many bitter regrets and lonely thoughts.

But it smote his spirit now like an awful voice of warning and of woe. Should he ever listen to it again, after this wearisome, sorrowful night ?

Which way should he go ? he again asked. He wished himself once more in a field of hay-cocks, with a sweet bed of clover to lie down in until morning. But go far he could not ; his tired and aching limbs almost refused to bear his weight.

He thought of the hotel stables ; but they were dark — locked, no doubt, for the night. - He did not feel able to walk to the village, nor even as far as the nearest barn.

As a last resort, he remembered the old fish-house — that great, desolate, empty, dilapidated shell beside the wharf, built partly on piles and projecting over the water. It was about as lonesome and comfortless a place as he could think of, but it would be at least a shelter, and he knew how to get in at the door.

He left that open as he entered. Even the soli-



tary earth and sky seemed company to him in that dreary place. He could see the stars through rents in the clapboards and roof. And something glimmered darkly beneath his feet.

It was the tide, rising on the muddy slope under the fish-house, and swashing against the piles; mysteriously murmuring, and indistinctly discerned through breaks in the old rotten floor.

Arthur shuddered to think, "What if I should step through one of these awful holes?" But he knew the place well, having kept Job's fuel there ever since he had a windfall of shavings from some carpenters at the hotel stables.

He groped to the corner where the shavings were, spread them out as well as he could with his wounded and weary hands, and lay down upon them, with his bag for a pillow.

And the tide moaned beneath him, and the sea bellowed on the bar, and the stars shone through the roof. And there, still in his damp clothes, with wet feet and an aching head, the poor little unheroic hero slept.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## ARTHUR'S LETTER.

THE next morning there was an unusual commotion in the home which Arthur had left two weeks before.

No news of the runaway had reached his parents in all that time; except that two boys had been seen, at sunrise on the day of his strange disappearance, going down the river in a canoe which, from its description, they could not doubt was Stub's.

That he had gone, and with that bad companion, was all they knew.

The shock of the discovery, when he did not come home at night, that his fishing-suit had been left and his good gray suit worn in its place, and that some of his underclothes were also missing, with his sister Maria's travelling-bag, — the first shock and anguish of that terrible discovery had settled down into the dull, ceaseless, gnawing sor-

row and anxiety of dreary days and sleepless nights ; and his absence, though never out of their minds, had almost ceased to be spoken of in the little household.

Mr. Wing, with all his grief, was at first extremely indignant at the boy's behavior. "I never supposed," he said, "that my boy could be guilty of such outrageous folly and ingratitude, but I have always said that if he should do such a thing, I'd let him go, — I'd let him reap the consequences of his conduct. I stick to that. He has left a good home without cause, — repaid our constant kindness with the basest cruelty, and I am not going to take the first step to find him or bring him back."

The mother had no such feeling of resentment to help her bear her affliction ; and even in him it had worn off a little with the lapse of time. He had grown old in those two weeks.

Then came that morning, when Maria, who had been early to the post-office, ran home in haste and flew into the house, bearing the long looked-for but despaired-of letter — the first token of life, the first breath of remorse and affection, which Arthur sent to his mother.

This, word for word, was the scrawl :—

MY DEAR MOTHER, — *I suppose you would like to know I am Well and what I am Doing and I am Sorry I have not writen before as well as Sorry for some other things that canot be Helpt now, What I have done has been verry bad and Foollish and I do not deserve you should Forgive me, I am at work for a man who was Taken sick last night and I went for the docter for him and I write this while I am Takeing care of him today, my love to all, I was to Ashamed to write before but I will write again verry soon.*

ARTHUR.

A few words in this badly spelt and still more badly punctuated missive had been scratched out ; one long word particularly had been carefully obliterated with the pen, and the word *man* written over it.

The letter bore no date or address ; as if Arthur had not expected a reply, and did not care to have his parents know where he was.

Maria read it aloud in a trembling voice, deciphering some of the words with difficulty, while her mother listened with pale and excited features, and her father stood stern and anxious, with his hands on the back of a chair.

“ Well, he is alive, if that is any comfort ! ” said Maria, after she had got through. “ It’s a shame,”

she added, "that a boy who has been to school as much as he has shouldn't write better than that."

"O Maria!" said Mrs. Wing, with streaming tears, "I am only too thankful that he has written at all! I wish I could go—I wish I could fly to him at once!"

"At work, is he?" said the father, casting his eye over the letter. "I am glad of that. It will do him good; keep him out of mischief. The good-for-nothing! to leave us in ignorance of his whereabouts all this time! He doesn't tell us where he is now!"

In fact, there was only the village postmark on the letter to give any information on that point.

"Write, Maria! write to him this minute!" exclaimed the mother. "But then," she reflected, "there is no mail to go out now till evening, and he might not get a letter. O father!" she said, pleadingly, "I wish you would go and find him!"

"I! You don't catch me!" replied Mr. Wing, fixing his features in a hard expression. "Unless I go to give him a good thrashing!"

"Don't think of that," said the mother, taking the letter in hand. "He was led away. I know he has suffered, and I am sure he is sorry."

"I should hope he was, after such misconduct!"

But I have something else to do besides looking up a runaway."

"You can get off from your business one day. Only consider," the mother continued to plead, "he may leave that place, or something may happen to him, and we may never hear of him again. I believe *I* will go if *you* don't!"

"You! that's a pretty notion!" Mr. Wing exclaimed. "If anybody goes I go. But we're not sure of finding him, as I see. That postmark is no sure clew."

"You could find him, or you would at least try, if you were half as anxious about him as I am," Mrs. Wing replied. "It seems as if I couldn't wait a minute! my poor, poor boy!"

Her husband was beginning to relent. "He isn't worth half this anxiety and trouble," he said, gloomily. "But I suppose I must go."

"Oh, you are so good!" exclaimed the grateful mother. "And you will be gentle with him, I know!"

"As gentle as he deserves, you may be sure of that!"

Mr. Wing was, indeed, almost as impatient as his wife to see his runaway son once more, and he added after a pause, which she filled up with weeping, —

"If I am going at all, I suppose I may as well try to get the next train to town. Then there is an eastern train a little after noon; if I take that, I may possibly get on his track and find him before night. I'll try for it!"

"Thank heaven! Oh, if that boy only knew how we love him, and how much we are ready to sacrifice for him!" said the mother, reading again the precious, ill-spelled, blotted scrawl.

"He doesn't say anything about Stub," said Mr. Wing, looking over her shoulder, "and I am glad of that!"

He added presently, with a look of satisfaction, —

"I see another clew to trace him by. There can't be more than two or three doctors in a small town like that, and it will be easy to find the one he went for a night or two ago."

## CHAPTER XXXV.

## THE CLEW AND THE SEARCH.

THE clew proved a good one. Mr. Wing reached, that afternoon, the village named in the post-mark on the letter; and the first person he called on was our picturesque friend, the doctor, whose portliness tipped up the bow of the dory when Arthur rowed him by moonlight down the creek.

"Yes," said he, glancing his eye over the letter which the anxious father showed him, "I think it must have been your boy who came for me, between two and three o'clock yesterday morning."

He applied a magnifying glass to the handwriting, and presently exclaimed, more positively, "This settles it! He says he is at work for a man who was taken sick. But he had written a longer word first, in place of *man*, and then scribbled over it with his pen."

"I noticed that," said Mr. Wing. "Can you make it out?"



"Perfectly well. He wrote *fisherman* first. You can see for yourself."

The doctor gave the letter and the glass to Mr. Wing, who said, —

"It is plain enough. He must have felt, after he had written it, a little ashamed to let us know he was at work for a fisherman. I have been very fortunate in finding you, doctor. Now I must lose no time. Where does this fisherman live?"

"He isn't where he was when your boy wrote that letter. I found a place for him just out of the village; and the hotel folks had him brought up yesterday afternoon."

"And my son?"

"I don't know. I really haven't heard. I have been so busy!" said the doctor, appearing somewhat disturbed. "I ought to have looked out for him, and seen that he was got out of that wretched hole."

"What do you mean by *wretched hole*?" Mr. Wing inquired, with a shade of pain and anxiety.

"It's a miserable little hut, to begin with," said the doctor, "and two men, one after the other, have taken a malignant fever in it."

"Contagious?" Mr. Wing asked, growing sick at heart.

"It looks like it," said the doctor. "Your boy is rather young to have it; and I trust he is well out of the place by this time. At all events, I cautioned him against drinking the water of an old well, which may have given the disease to the two men."

"Please direct me at once!"

The unhappy father was already on his feet. He had not known till then how deeply, with all his faults, he loved his truant son.

"I will harness up and drive you down there," said the doctor.

His buggy was soon ready, and as they were riding down the creek road he told of Arthur's coming for him by moonlight, and how manfully the boy had stood by Job even after he had been warned of the danger of the situation, adding,— "He certainly showed himself a noble little fellow!"

"I am glad to hear you say that," Mr. Wing replied. "I always knew that he had good and generous traits, in spite of the bad influences around him."

Arrived at the wharf, they stepped down from the buggy, and Mr. Wing was shown the shanty which had been Arthur's home. He compressed

his features to conceal his emotion, heaved a sigh and said, after a pause, —

“That he should have come to this! Who knows — who can tell — where he is now?”

“This man ought to know,” said the doctor. “He is one of the fishermen; the first who was sick.”

The senior Dorr was coming from the old fish-house, in the open door of which appeared the face of Dorr the younger, looking out at the doctor and his companion.

“How about that boy who was here with your partner?” cried the doctor, addressing the elder.

“That’s what I should like to know myself,” replied Dorr, with a very different face from that which, in his wrath at the loss of his boats, he had shown Arthur the night before. “It has an ugly look!”

“What has an ugly look?” the doctor asked, while Mr. Wing could only wait and listen, with a foreboding heart.

“The mystery!” said Dorr.

“What mystery? Explain!”

“I wish I could, or that someboby would come along who could,” said Dorr. “Perhaps *you* can. Just look here.”

As he was conducting the visitors into the fish-house, he continued : —

“The boy came back here last night while I was waiting to get news of my boats. He had gone out to the trawl in the dory, and my son here, who had taken the *Jolly Rover*, picked him up just as the big blow was coming on.

“They lost both boats, got blowed ashore by Brant Inlet, and found their way to Jerry Stromer’s house, where they might have been comfortable, — where, in fact, my son stayed. But he says that boy had it on his mind that he must get back so as to take care of Job; and come he would, and did, spite of everything — rain, darkness, mud, and mire !”

“I never saw such a fellow !” spoke up Dick, who, for some reason, appeared in a more serious state of mind than on any previous occasion when we have had the pleasure of meeting him. “In the first place, he owed me no good turn. I don’t mind saying now, that I had done him a bad turn before ever he came here. He paid me by helping me out of the water last evening when anybody else would have left me to drown, — and good enough for me ! Then, when we had got to Stromer’s house, and he ought to have stayed and

taken care of himself as I did, he left everything to walk back here five or six miles, — as good as a dozen miles over a good road by daylight, — to take care of Job.”

“I didn’t understand all about it,” rejoined the elder Dorr. “Job was gone when he come. I was pretty cross, I suppose. I didn’t want him to get the fever in that shebang, and I turned him out.”

“What became of him? That’s what we want to know!” insisted the doctor.

“That’s what I want to know, too,” said Dorr. “Here’s the facts. He went off last night, and I never thought no more about him till my son come over to-day, and told his story. That made me think I hadn’t done jest right by the boy. Then I remembered I had found the door of this old fish-house open this morning, and it struck me he might have come in here to sleep.”

“In here!” said the horrified father, with a look at the desolate surroundings, — the rents in the blackened clapboards, the empty salting-tubs falling to pieces, and the great holes in the floor.

“And it seems he did,” continued Dorr. “Here’s the bed he must have slept in,” showing the pile of shavings. “And here’s something else we have jest discovered.”

"My boy's hat! And the satchel he carried away with him!" Mr. Wing exclaimed, in sudden trepidation.

"Are you his father?" Dorr inquired in a more subdued tone.

"I am. I have come to find him. How — where could he have gone and left these things behind?"

"That's what looks ugly about it," said Dorr. "We haven't found anybody who saw him go out of here in the morning."

"He had a common, broad-brimmed, straw hat, which he lost in the dory," said Dick. "Then Mrs. Stromer gave him a light cap which he wore away from her house and had on when father first saw him last night."

"But when he was picking up his things," the elder Dorr resumed, "he took this hat down from a nail and put it on, while he doubled up the cap and crammed it into his pocket."

"O Arthur!" said Mr. Wing, in a shaking voice. "It must have been dark in here! What was to prevent his stepping through one of these holes?"

"Nothing!" answered Dick. "And that's what I said he did as soon as I saw his bag and hat."

They all looked down through an opening in the

floor and saw the dark water swirling and swashing among the piles.

"Have you looked for him in the creek?" the doctor asked.

"There ain't much use in that," Dorr replied. "If he was drowned, one tide has ebbed since and must have carried him out to sea."

"Have him looked for," said Mr. Wing. "I will pay all costs."

"I suppose, from what I hear," said Dorr, "my pardner and I were owing the boy something."

"Job told me yesterday that the boy was a great help to him," said the doctor, "and that he owed him five dollars."

"I was owing him, too, a little — for borrowed money," Dick was constrained to confess. "I wish now I could have paid him last evening. Then he wouldn't have been obliged to crawl into such a place as this for a lodging."

It was the first time for years that anything had come so near touching the heart and conscience of that hardened young sinner.

Mr. Wing was walking silently out of the fish-house, looking at the hat and satchel which he held in his hand, when the doctor remarked, —

"It's by no means certain that he went through

one of those holes into the water. It's quite as probable that he walked out of the door, leaving his hat and bag behind him for some reason."

"I don't think so. But it is possible. And I won't give him up while there is the smallest hope left of his being alive," said Mr. Wing, recovering his firmness. "Alive or dead, it is a comfort to know that he was doing his duty, as he understood it, at last."

Search was immediately made in the creek and along the sea-beach, while the doctor set on foot inquiries in the town; but all to so little purpose, that Mr. Wing sent the following telegraphic message home that night:

*"He is gone. Cannot be found. I shall look further."*



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

## THE WAYFARER.

MRS. WING did not receive that discouraging despatch until the next morning, when along with it came a letter of very different import from another person, which caused her to prepare immediately for a journey and follow her husband to the coast of Maine.

To explain the origin of that letter, we must go back a little.

Arthur had not stepped through the floor and been carried away by the tide. Just how he left the fish-house, however, was not quite clear even in his own mind.

Very early on the morning of his disappearance, he found himself staggering along the creek road with an aching head and a dizzy brain, which seemed rather dreaming than awake.

He must have been delirious, or walking in his sleep, when he got up from his bed of shavings and went out without his hat or bag. He was

light-headed still. His flesh was burning hot, and yet the touch of the cool morning breeze gave him every now and then an aguish shiver.

He had unconsciously taken the Stromer cap from his pocket and put it on his head; and he did not think of his bag until he had nearly reached the village. Then he felt too sick to go back for it. Indeed, he cared little whether he ever saw it again.

Scarcely anybody was astir; and he must have passed through the village without being observed. He felt somewhat better as he went on; his step was stronger, his head was not so giddy.

He became conscious of a motive which he seemed to have formed in a dream. That was to walk to Landport and there take the steamer, in order to return home. But it was many miles to Landport, and he now remembered that he had no money for a journey.

No money! and the only friend he could think of, now that he had lost Job, was the farmer who carried him over this same road when he was in pursuit of Stub.

"Maybe he will keep me and give me something to do, so that I can earn my passage home," he said, as he trudged feebly along.

For now an unutterable longing possessed him to get home again on any terms. Home seemed dearer to him than life itself. Yes! he would have been willing to die if he could but get back to his friends, and be forgiven and feel once more his mother's love and care.

"Why didn't I go back when I could?" he asked himself, despairingly. "Job might have given me the money. Or why was I ashamed to write and ask for it? I might have walked and begged my way!"

There was no hardship, no humiliation, which he would not willingly suffer — so it seemed to him now — in order to regain that blessedness which he had so lightly flung away, and which he feared he would never have again.

"I am so sick!" he said, sitting down by the roadside to rest. "If I have got Job's fever, there will be nobody to take care of me, and I shall die."

He was so fearful that he might die on the highway, or in the fields, that he soon got up and tottered on as before.

"The fever is catching," he said, talking aloud to himself, "and he" — thinking of the farmer — "won't want me in his house. But maybe he will

let me lie on the hay in his barn. I wonder if anybody will dare to come near me? I wasn't afraid to stay with Job!"

He was sure that he would know the house when he saw it; and remembering his previous journey, he did not think he could be far from it now. It was a cloudy morning, but the sun must have been up a long while, he had been so long on the road.

Alas! he was not much more than half way to the farmer's yet; there was such a difference between skipping over the distance in a light wagon, and dragging his sore limbs and sick body slowly forward in this snail-like way.

He met a few persons on the road, and tried to make inquiries of one, but could not tell even the name of the man he was going to find.

These people seem to have treated him kindly; but he could remember little about them afterwards, except that they looked at him dubiously, and that one asked him if he was sick and if he had not better go home.

He saw some boys at play in a dooryard as he passed; — close by, yet how far off they seemed! How utterly foreign to him sounded their ringing laughter! Had he ever laughed? Would he ever laugh again?

He said to himself at last, "I *must* have gone as far as that house! Can I have passed it? Maybe I am on the wrong road! Oh, what shall I do!"

He was so weak and trembling that he could hardly keep from falling in the road. But there was a house a little way beyond, and he resolved not to give up until he reached it. "For if I sit down," he said, "I shall never get on my feet again!"

A man was crossing the road between the house and a barn opposite, when he came up.

"Mister! — can you tell me — I want" — began Arthur, in a voice so faint and hollow, and with eyes so glassy and glaring, that the man looked at him in astonishment.

"*What* do you want, my boy?" he asked kindly.

"A yellow house on this side," said Arthur, encouraged; "with an old wagon-house close by, in the street."

"You must mean Winslow's," said the man. "I know the place. It's farther on."

"How far?" Arthur asked with a gleam of hope.

"Oh, I don't know exactly; a little over a mile."

Had the man said "a thousand miles," the answer could hardly have dismayed the poor little wayfarer more. A mile; he did not feel now that he could walk another rod.

He stood gasping and trembling, when the man, alarmed at his appearance, said hastily, "I am only the hired help here; wait a minute; I'll see the folks," and returned to the house.

Arthur could not stand still any longer; it was easier to stagger forward, and so he followed instinctively towards the door.

He had not gone more than half way, when the man, who had entered, came out again, and immediately two or three faces appeared, — women's faces, — regarding him with curiosity, which quickly changed to wonder and compassion.

One of the women advanced eagerly before the others, and her face was not strange, — or was Arthur once more in a delirious dream?

There was no look of recognition in the eyes she bent upon him; only pity for an unknown boy's distress. And yet he could not be mistaken. It was no fancy of his fevered brain.

"You don't know me!" he feebly exclaimed, reaching out his hands towards her with a haggard, imploring face.

"No, my poor boy!" she said, in the tenderest, most sweetly sympathizing tones he had ever heard.



"I don't wonder!" he said. "I — I — you saw me ——"

Voice and sight and strength suddenly failed him; and reeling forward, he sunk down in a swoon at his Good Angel's feet.



## CHAPTER XXXVII.

## THE MEETING.

WHY, Eliz'beth! do you know him?" said the eldest of the three women who had come out of the farm-house. And she hastened to help lift Arthur up.

"I think he must be a boy I saw on the steam-boat two weeks ago," the younger one replied. "He is very much changed! We must get him into the house."

When Arthur came to his senses, he found himself lying on a lounge, in a strange room, surrounded by the strange faces he had seen, and the one that was not strange. There was a taste of brandy in his mouth and a very pungent odor in his nostrils.

"You are feeling better!" said Elizabeth, cheeringly.

"Yes!" Arthur whispered, looking up with a faint smile of gratitude at his Good Angel. "I

didn't suppose — how does it happen — that you —— ”

He was too weak to say more, but his eyes looked the wonder and thankfulness that filled his heart.

“That I am here?” she said. “That is simple enough. This is my father's house. This is my own mother you see here.”

“Does your uncle live here, too?” Arthur asked, unable to recover from his bewilderment at this strange meeting.

“Oh, no! His home is in Landport. That is one of my homes, too. I came over here from the hotel yesterday to make my parents a visit. Where did *you* come from?”

“You know that fisherman's hut — on the wharf — below the hotel?” Arthur murmured. “I was there. I saw you!”

“Are you the boy I heard of only yesterday, who was taking care of the sick man there?” said Elizabeth, in great surprise.

Arthur whispered a feeble assent.

“Then, why are you not there now?” she demanded.

“He was carried away,” Arthur replied, “and when I wasn't needed any longer, his partner

turned me out. I was wet; I slept in the old fish-house; and I—I am afraid,” he faltered, — “do you believe I have got the fever?”

“I hope not!” Elizabeth exclaimed, with a start.

“You mustn’t take it from me,” he said. “Put me anywhere—in the barn—only don’t turn me out of doors!”

“Out of doors!” echoed Elizabeth, “No, my poor boy! You shall have shelter and good nursing here. Mother! we must get him to bed. Pull off his shoes, Martin! Oh, his poor, wet, muddy feet! Where’s father? He will go for the doctor.”

So Arthur was put into dry, cool sheets, and a doctor from the next town was brought; and then the letter was written by Elizabeth which hurried Mrs. Wing off the next day after her husband, in the way we have mentioned.

Mr. Wing that day continued his fruitless search, in every direction except the right one. He looked for his lost boy on the land and in the water; went up and down the creek with the Dorrs, and along the rocks and beaches; and drove out on the roads Arthur might have taken if he had started homeward by land.

He did not think of his going on towards Landport. But if his boy was still alive he might, on leaving the old fish-house, have found his way back to the farmer's, where he had been so hospitably received after the wreck of the *Jolly Rover*.

So Mr. Wing took Dick Dorr into a buggy he had hired, and made a trip down the coast, to Stromer's house, and the scene of the wreck. Here he was, of course, not more successful than before. But he talked with good Mr. Stromer; and was shown the wild spot where Arthur climbed the surf-buried ledge, and where he afterwards helped Dick out of the water; and heard meanwhile many things of deep, sad interest regarding his missing son.

All the resentment had by this time died out of his heart; and he felt only sorrow for the misguided boy's great error and mysterious fate.

He had stopped the night before in the village. He was riding back there again, utterly discouraged, planning how he should break the woful news to his wife, to whom he had sent only that brief telegraphic despatch as yet; when to his great astonishment a rapidly-driven buggy going out on another street drew up before him, the horse reined in by a man's strong hand, and a woman screamed and beckoned.

That woman was his wife.

"She couldn't bear the suspense," he thought; "and so she followed me." For he did not once imagine that she could have received tidings which he had not.

"Husband!" she called, as he drove up and stopped. "Have you found him?"

"No," he said, dejectedly; "and I am afraid ——"

He faltered before telling his dismal story, and asked, — "What did you come for? It could do no good! Where are you going now?"

"I am going to see him!" cried the hopeful mother. "For *I* have found him; that is, I know where he is. I have a letter!"

"Gracious Heaven!" he exclaimed, "do you know what you say? Can it be true?"

When told how true it was, and that Arthur was lying sick at a house two miles out of the village, he was greatly overcome, and the two parents cried together, there in the public street.

The man she had hired to carry her out to the farm-house, gave place to Mr. Wing in the buggy, and drove the other horse back to the stable.

Each heard the other's story, as they rode out to find their son; and many more tears were shed

before they reached the house. The father felt as if his heart had been lifted out of a grave. But now a new anxiety beset him. His boy was sick—so Elizabeth's letter had said. Could it be with that dreadful fever?

Elizabeth, the Good Angel, received them at the door, and then—how shall we describe their joy on seeing their lost boy again; how convey the faintest notion of their relief and gratitude on learning that he was already better; that it was not the dreaded fever at all which he had, but an illness, severe indeed, yet only such as exposure, suffering and fatigue had caused?

Arthur could not say much for himself, but lay there in bed, his wan cheek on the white pillow, happy at sight of his forgiving and beloved parents (how beloved he had never known till now), and at the touch of his mother's hand on his forehead; deeply happy, although remorseful and ashamed while Elizabeth stood near and spoke for him.

"Arthur and I have had some good talks," she said, "and we understand each other pretty well. I understood him and liked him when I first saw him on the steamboat. I knew he had a good mother!"

That mother's hand still caressed the boy's

forehead and hair, while her tears fell upon his own hand outstretched towards her on the bed. His lips quivered and he heaved a big sigh.

"I was very near him afterwards without knowing it. Perhaps it was as well that I did not know it. The right time had hardly come. It was necessary that he should go through all that he has suffered, and I believe Providence guided him to me at last."

"I have heard good things of him while I have been looking him up," said Mr. Wing. "I am glad to know that he *can* be as faithful and devoted as any boy, where his feelings are interested."

"They never were so much interested in his duties at home as they might have been," said the Good Angel. "Trashy stories, which gave him false ideas of life, and other bad influences, made him regard home as a very poor and unromantic place."

Arthur put his hand over his face to hide it, while slow tears could be seen trickling down the pale cheek under his fingers.

"I am afraid," said Mr. Wing, "that we — that I — have been to blame for the kind of reading he has had so much of. I had a feeling that it wasn't healthy for him; yet I never took the trouble to

examine it carefully, or to provide something better in its place. Yes!" he added, with a regretful sigh, "I was greatly to blame!"

"And his associates," said Mrs. Wing; "we were too careless about them!"

"You were simply too indulgent; that's what he thinks," Arthur's Good Angel resumed. "But he doesn't blame anybody but himself. He was tired of what he called his humdrum life, and started off to do something grand and heroic in the world."

Arthur covered his face more closely to conceal a blush of shame, while she went on:—

"But he soon found that he had no more of the dime-novel heroism in him than other boys of his age. He has learned that the only heroism worth anything is that which does the simple duty that comes to hand, however humble or unpleasant. And *we* have learned that he has a good deal of this better kind of heroism after all."

Still Arthur held his fingers over his face, while the tears slid down under them. And still his mother stroked his forehead and hair.

"He found as much difference between the life of adventure he expected would open before him, and life as it actually proved, as there was between



the fanciful *Jolly Rover* and the real *Jolly Rover*, that went to pieces on the rocks two nights ago."

Then Arthur looked up with a shamefaced smile through his tears. "I was going to be a sort of *Jolly Rover* myself!" he said. "Now see what has come of it!"

"But you are not wrecked, thank Heaven!" cried his Good Angel. "You have a long and prosperous voyage before you yet, I am sure. You are going to atone nobly for all your mistakes, and be the comfort of these good parents who love you so well."

"I will! I will!" said Arthur, with devout earnestness in his look and tones.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

## FAREWELLS.

MR. WING took the evening train and returned home that night. But the mother remained to nurse her boy until he was well enough to travel.

Anticipating his condition, she had brought with her his Sunday clothes, which he was able in two or three days to put on, and two days later he was strong enough to undertake the homeward journey.

Before starting, he was gratified to learn that Job's fever was taking a favorable turn. He also received another pleasant surprise.

The elder Dorr sent him twelve dollars; six on account of what the partners owed him; and six — though the father had a hundred times declared that he would never pay another cent of Dick's debts — the remaining six on account of that rogue of a son.

He could well afford to do this, he said to

Elizabeth's father, by whose hand he sent the money, for Dick had made a new pledge to amend his life, and — what was, perhaps, a more certain blessing — the dory which Arthur lost had been found blown ashore, and but slightly damaged.

Arthur was glad to get this money, for he wanted to pay his own doctor's bill and to make his Good Angel a present.

"But I am afraid she won't take anything," he said.

"Make the present to her mother, who has had so much trouble on our account, and who has been so kind," said Mrs. Wing. "Elizabeth can't object to that; it will please her much better than anything we could do for her."

Elizabeth insisted on their going home by the way of Landport, and spending a day with her at her uncle's. This they were glad to do, especially as it gave them an opportunity to consult her taste with regard to a clock which Mrs. Wing wished to purchase "for a friend."

She had discovered that a good serviceable clock, to replace one that had been lately broken, would be about as acceptable as anything at the house where they had been so hospitably entertained; and to the delight of Arthur, a handsome

one was bought in Landport, under his Good Angel's careful inspection. She, of course, knew nothing of its destination until it followed them home to her uncle's; and then she could not blame Arthur very much.

"I am very sorry you spent your money in that way," she said, with that charmingly sympathetic voice and smile of hers, "but I am pleased that you thought of it. I will see that mother has the clock; it shall take the place of the old one on the sitting-room mantel-piece, and remind us of you always."

She was a sort of adopted daughter to her uncle and aunt, who had no children of their own. Their home was hers; and she wished to keep her visitors there another day; but yielded to Mrs. Wing's quiet decision, that they must go by the evening boat.

It was the same steamer which Arthur had sailed in before, now put into repair and making her regular trips.

As he stood on the wharf, showing his mother how the great paddle-box had been crushed by the bows of the brig, he heard his name called, and looking around, saw a face which gave him a disagreeable start.

It was Stub's, looking, like his garments, rather the worse for rough usage.

"I thought I knew you!" said young Culbert.



"I'm tickled to see an old face again, if we did have a kind of a quarrel!"

"Don't say anything about that," Arthur replied. "You don't look as though you'd had a very good time."

"Well, I hain't, not very," Stub confessed, with a sheepish sort of grin. "Things have happened the oddest ever you sor! But I'm going to try my luck in a different way and in a different part of the world now."

"You'd better go home with me," said Arthur.

"I should smile!" replied Stub. "See that three-master over yonder? Well, I've shipped aboard her and sail to-morrow for Rio."

"As a green hand, I suppose," said Arthur.

"Of course. 'Twas the best I could do. Money about gone; I had to make some sort of a move. But something is going to happen," Stub added, with his old assertive head-shake. "Something always does!"

"That's true! though it isn't always something just to our liking," said Arthur. "Have you any word to send to your mother?"

"Tell her I'm having a boss time, and I'm coming home when I've made a fortune," laughed Stub.

"I'm afraid, then, she won't see you very soon," said Arthur. "Good-by."

He was not sorry to part from his old companion.

With very different feelings he went over to take leave of his new friend. She was waiting with his mother on board the boat.

"I shall expect to hear good things of you," said that Good Angel, kissing him at parting as an angel, indeed, might have done. "You will write to me. And we shall certainly see each other again!"



She stepped to the wharf, where her carriage was waiting, but stood waving her handkerchief and smiling her adieu, as the steamer swung out and moved off.

Arthur remembered how he had watched that signal once before, when he was sailing away from her on that morning of dismal fog, in Job Buck-

horn's dory. A flood of memories rushed over him and blinding tears filled his eyes.

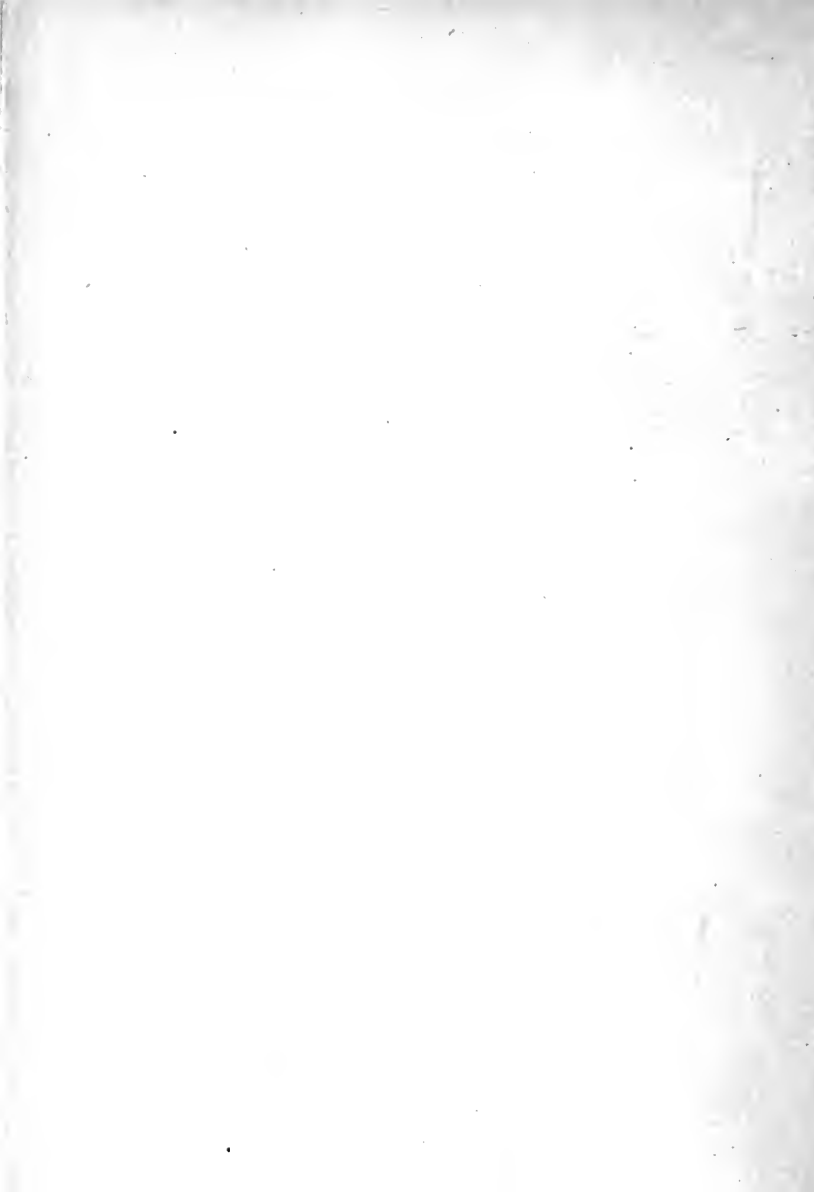
Waving his handkerchief with one hand, he held his mother's clasped tightly with the other, consoled for the parting by her loving presence, and by another exquisitely sweet and holy thought :

He was going home !

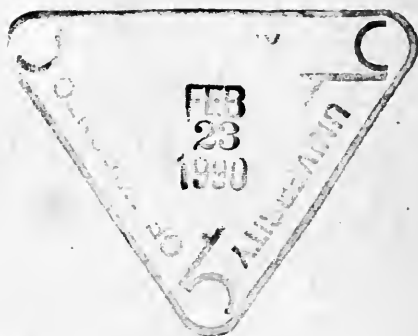
THE END.











PS  
3097  
J65  
1883  
C.1  
ROBA



THE JOLLY ROVER